

FABENZ

Foundation and Bridging Educators New Zealand

3rd BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

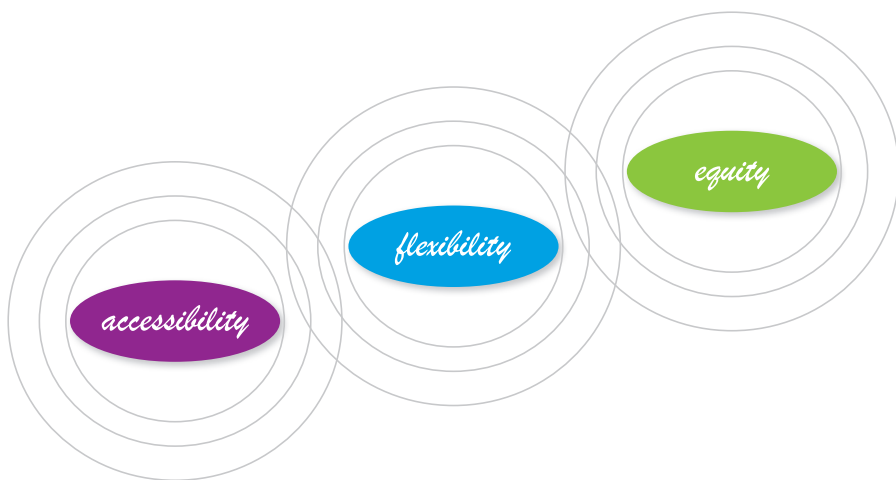
Accessibility • Flexibility • Equity

1 & 2 December 2016

Unitec Institute of Technology
Auckland, New Zealand



Unitec
Institute of Technology
TE WHARE WĀNANGA O WAIRAKA



CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Rae Trewartha (Convenor)
Unitec Institute of Technology

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SPONSORS



Welcome

Haere mai and a warm welcome to Auckland, Aotearoa, New Zealand for the Foundation and Bridging Educators New Zealand third biennial conference, hosted by Unitec Institute of Technology.

We know many people have travelled from across Australia and New Zealand to attend this conference and we are delighted to have the pleasure of hosting colleagues from such a broad range of institutions across the sector.

Foundation and bridging education in New Zealand is facing significant challenges, with the redevelopment of all certificate programmes to meet the requirements of the new national certificates and the changes in funding that have affected the viability of a number of programmes. The Australian sector is also facing a number of issues as they negotiate government challenges to the way they deliver learning. We are hoping that the conference will be a place to relax, network and provide inspiration for the road ahead.

Please excuse the Unitec campus - we are, as I'm sure you can see, in the process of carrying out a major rebuild. When the construction work is completed, we will have an exciting and modern campus but at present, as maintenance takes second place to building, some areas are not as spic and span as we would like. We do apologise for any shortcomings - the trees are still gorgeous, though.

Enjoy the conference!

Rae Trewartha

Conference Convenor

FABENZ Co-ordinator



Keynotes



Dr Emily Decker Lardner

Equity and Engagement:

The power of simple tools in complex, contradictory contexts

The contradictory contexts in which we work include the policy emphasis on access rather than quality opportunity and an emphasis on vocational preparation in opposition to developing academic skills. In the U.S., policy shifts coupled with structural inequality and systemic racism result in higher debt burdens and lower post-college wages for students of color and students from low-income families. In these contexts, where many faculty feel overtaxed and under-supported how do we stay focused on creating the best learning conditions for our students? In this keynote, I'll discuss three powerful yet simple practices every educator can integrate into their practice: working with our own and our students' mindsets, practicing transparency in our teaching and learning practices, and helping students develop the habits of mind they need to succeed particularly as they begin their studies.

Dr Emily Decker Lardner

Emily Lardner has a BA in English from Augustana College, an MA in English from the University of Michigan and her PhD, in English Language and Literature is from the University of Michigan. She is the Director of the Washington Center at The Evergreen State College, where she also teaches writing. The Washington Center is a public service center, which focuses on helping colleges, community colleges and universities create better learning experiences for students, particularly undergraduate students. Emily's interests lie within the field of how campuses use learning community-based programs to promote student success through inclusive education and integrated learning.



Stephen White

Enhancing learner success:
Overcoming mental health challenges

A review of research suggests that high number of students (80%) in tertiary education experience mental health difficulties. For young learners in foundation courses the prevalence and incidence of these challenges is likely to be higher. Developmental and psychosocial factors also contribute to the experience of these difficulties and can impact a learner's ability to cope and transcend the challenges of tertiary education. Many learners don't seek support or help for mental health issues for fear of discrimination. These issues lead to low self-esteem, reduced confidence, interpersonal difficulties, absenteeism and poor retention. Education in these foundation course can play a key role in supporting these learners to develop self-awareness, confidence and esteem, along with skills that will enable many learners to overcome the challenge created by mental health issues, and this will lead to successful completion. Skills in screening for mental health problems, pastoral care and support, and strategies for brokerage and referral will be considered.

Stephen White

Stephen has worked predominantly in mental health settings since graduating (inpatient, community, crisis teams and specialist teams). His involvement in tertiary education began in 2000, and he has worked for the Wairarapa Polytechnic (in a conjoint arrangement with Massey University), the New Zealand Institute of Training in Social Services, Te Wānanga O Aotearoa and more recently Wintec. Currently Stephen co-ordinates and teaches on the National Certificate in Mental Health (Mental Health Support Work), as well as teaching on both the counselling and social work endorsements of the Bachelor of Applied Social Science programme. In 2010, Stephen was presented with the Wintec Student Experience Award, which recognises a staff member who has consistently demonstrated student centredness in their role.



Dr Sally Kift

Enabling Accessibility, Flexibility and Equity:
A Transition Pedagogy for Pathway Programs

As the Bradley Report in Australia reminded us “higher education can transform the lives of individuals and through them their communities and the nation by engendering a love of learning for its own sake and a passion for intellectual discovery”. In 2016, as we come together both to interrogate and celebrate higher education’s accessibility, flexibility and equity after a year of great global tumult, enabling the transformative power of further education for a more equitable and just society has arguably never been more critical. From a success-based perspective, this presentation will explore factors related to the learning, success and retention of non-traditional learners who pursue pathways into higher education. When the international agenda around inclusion of under-represented cohorts is examined, what emerges as critical is intentional engagement and support of the “whole student”, academically, socially and pastorally. Quite purposefully, we must enable and facilitate learning relationships and environments built on respect, trust, connectedness and inclusivity. To illustrate, a number of Australasian examples of good practice and inclusive pedagogy will be discussed under the organising framework of a “Transition Pedagogy”. In this context, Transition Pedagogy offers a guiding philosophy for intentional first year curriculum design and support that carefully scaffolds the early learning experiences of contemporary heterogeneous cohorts.

Dr Sally Kift

Sally Kift is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at James Cook University and President of the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows (ALTF). Prior to commencing at JCU in 2012, Sally was a Professor of Law at Queensland University of Technology, where she also served as Law Faculty Assistant Dean, Teaching & Learning (2001-2006) and QUT’s foundational Director, First Year Experience (2006-2007). Sally is a national Teaching Award winner (2003) and national Program Award winner (2007). She was awarded a Senior Fellowship by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in 2006 to investigate the first year experience and is currently a Discipline Scholar in Law.



Grant Robertson

A plan for the future

The world of work is changing with technology developing at a pace faster than ever before. Technology is also making it easier than ever to start a business and connect with people all over the world. There is enormous opportunity, but also significant risk, that this change could lead to higher unemployment, greater insecurity and inequality. With this in mind the Labour Party launched the Future of Work Commission in 2014. For two years Labour have been listening to New Zealanders about their hopes and fears. Our recently released report has more than 60 recommendations on how we can confidently face the changing world and ensure decent, secure and well-paid work, and prepare ourselves to be resilient and adaptable as times change. The core recommendations in our report are to support training and education throughout life. We are proposing three years free post-secondary school training and education, professional career guidance and planning for every student. We believe that every worker who loses their job as a result of technological change should be supported to retrain. We need a just transition – no one should be left behind. We need to be ready for opportunities and take control of our own economic destiny. We are proposing that we focus on building wealth from the ground up, and recommending more support for entrepreneurs, stronger collective bargaining, digital equality and investing in our regions as well as research and development. If we retain the values that have guided us for 100 years, we can make the policy choices for the 21st century to invest in people, and we will rise to the challenge to give New Zealanders security and opportunity in the future of work.

Grant Robertson

Grant Robertson, Labour's Finance Spokesperson and Chair of the Future of Work Commission, has been the MP for Wellington Central since 2008. Grant has previously held spokesperson roles in Employment, Skills & Training, Economic Development and Tertiary Education. He has a BA in politics from Otago University, and upon leaving university, Grant joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He managed the New Zealand Overseas Aid Programme to Samoa and he was also posted to the United Nations in New York, working on environment and development issues. After returning to New Zealand he took on various other roles, including working in the office of Helen Clark, before becoming an MP.

Invited Speaker



Zain Thompson, Massey University

Developing mathematical inquiry in a community of learners

Who does most of the talking in your classroom? Who asks most of the questions in your classroom?

In most classrooms it is the teacher, but talking and questioning should be a shared role if students are to learn mathematics with enjoyment and rich understanding. Zain Thompson will draw on his own teaching and research to show how the role teachers take in the classroom is central to how their students participate and communicate effectively in mathematics. He will illustrate how ensuring that all students learn to explain and justify their mathematical reasoning, inquire into and explore the reasoning of others', is as much a part of learning mathematics as the conceptual understanding of mathematics. He will provide practical guidelines for establishing a mathematical inquiry community including how to support the students to work collaboratively together in small and large groups using mathematical discourse to conjecture, explain, agree and disagree, justify and make mathematical connections.

Zain Thompson

Zain Thompson is a mathematics mentor at Massey University, New Zealand. He currently works in a wide range of diverse schools in the Auckland region developing teachers' mathematics pedagogy.

Information for Presenters

Please familiarise yourself with the following information before your scheduled presentation time.

If you are scheduled to give a presentation, and you are using a PowerPoint, please ensure that you bring it loaded on to a USB memory stick and that it is compatible with Windows 10. If you have videos or animations in your presentation, please embed these files in your presentation and copy and transfer the video file together with your PowerPoint presentation. Without doing this, your video file will not function.

You can load your presentation on to the computer, in the room you will be presenting in, during the breaks. A member of the organizing team will be available to assist you.

Each room, is equipped with a whiteboard and pens, a data projector and a computer. Please let us know urgently if you require any other equipment.

Short Presentations

In fairness to the other presenters in your session space, session chairs have been asked to ensure that presenters keep strictly to the time allocated. We are anticipating that there may not be time for questions during the shorter sessions but, if that's the case, we hope you will be able to have follow-up discussions with people during the breaks.

Session Chairs

Chairs are responsible for introducing each speaker and keeping time. Where applicable, they will also facilitate questions. If you have any questions regarding the chairing of sessions please talk to the registration desk for help.

Thursday 1 December 2016

8:00am-8:45am	Building 170 - Reception area Registration, Coffee, Tea and Refreshments
8:45am	Meet outside Marae for official welcome
9:00-9:30am	Building 178 - Te Noho Katahitanga marae Pōwhiri Official opening of the conference: Dr Helen Anderson - Past coordinator, New Zealand Association of Bridging Educators
9:30-10:00am	Building 177 - Wharekai Morning Tea
10:05-10:15am	Building 170-1015, Lecture Theatre Conference housekeeping Rae Trewartha - Conference Convenor
10:20-11:20am	Building 170-1015, Lecture Theatre KEYNOTE ADDRESS Equity and Engagement: The power of simple tools in complex, contradictory contexts - Dr Emily Lardner, Washington Center at The Evergreen State College

New Technology
Programme Initiatives
Diversity
Success & Retention
Curriculum Initiatives

SESSION 1	Workshop Bldg. 170-2033	Presentation Bldg. 170-2035	Presentation Bldg. 170-1016	Presentation Bldg. 170-1064	Presentation Bldg. 170-2068	Presentation Bldg. 170-1015
11:30-11:55am	Bridging programs, teaching and technology for 21st century learning	Supporting resilience in the first year: Curriculum, consideration and cooperation - Sulay Jalloh	Building on identifiable common student experiences to enable success - Leonard Sanders - Emily Saverdera	Males in enabling: Their lives, their experiences, their perspective - Frank Armstrong - Trixie James	Successfully enabling students from foundation chemistry studies to higher levels of tertiary studies - Zoe Griffiths	Restructuring the habits: The case of Open Foundation students with a disability - Rosalee J. Bunn
12:00-12:25pm	- Anthea Fudge - Tanya Weiler	Improving achievement for Maori and Pasifika students in foundation studies - Kiri Waitai - Sharlene Strickland	The Yapug Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enabling program - Sharlene Leray-Dyer	Engineering curriculum: Pedagogy supporting students in a university pathway program - Leanne Yard	Student success, health and well-being in enabling education - Myfanwy Tilley - Sharron King	Tried and tested processes to improve retention and success in a Level 3/4 certificate programme - Christine Beker
12:30-1:15pm	Building 177 - Wharekai Lunch					
1:20-2:20pm	Building 170-1015, Lecture Theatre KEYNOTE ADDRESS A Plan for the Future - Grant Robertson, Labour Party MP					

SESSION 2	Workshop Bldg. 170-2031	Workshop Bldg. 170-1049	Presentation Bldg. 170-1016	Presentation Bldg. 170-1064	Presentation Bldg. 170-2068	Presentation Bldg. 170-1015
2:30-2:55pm	Best practices supporting indigenous student engagement in enabling programs and beyond	Introducing the 'Higher Expectation Framework': A dynamic approach for teaching adult learners - Trixie James	Pathways to success: Access with support is opportunity - Liz Smith	UOW College PASS: A flexibly-delivered student learning support program - Jann Roberts	Mentoring students who had opted to enrol in on-campus tertiary preparation classes, should support student class attendance: What we found was surprising! - Gary Orth	The challenge: An adventure through embedded literacy and numeracy - Naomi Bates
3:00-3:25pm	- Sharon King - Tanya Weiler - Stephen Dowdy - Myfanwy Tilley			Studying the digital competencies of access education students in a regional Australian university - Michelle Gray	Picturing pathways to education: The benefits of pre-enabling programs in widening participation - Michelle Mansfield	Academic adaptation experience of Indian international students: English language and cross-cultural barriers in EAP programs at an Australian university - Sang Soon Park
3:30-3:50pm	Building 177 - Wharekai Afternoon Tea					

SESSION 3	Workshop Bldg. 170-2031	Workshop Bldg. 170-1049	Presentation Bldg. 170-1016	Presentation Bldg. 170-1064	Presentation Bldg. 170-2068	Presentation Bldg. 170-1015
3:50-4:15pm	Developing mathematical inquiry in a community of learners	Playful learning: Incorporating games into the bridging classroom - Sandra Elsom	Enabling the enablers: Using 'big data' to identify ways of improving student performance and engagement in the Tertiary Enabling Program at Charles Darwin University - James Valentine - George Lambrinidis	A quest to tame the beast: Involving eLearning and social media to improve accessibility, flexibility and equity - Hanneltie Meintjes	Not just the library's responsibility: A cross-discipline, multimodal approach to teaching information literacy in an enabling program - Helen Holden	Flipping the classroom: Is it a flipping good idea, or a flop? - Trixie James
4:20-4:45pm	- Zain Thompson - Guest Speaker		Keeping things in perspective - the Hero's journey as a roadmap for success - Julie Willans - Karen Seary	OnTrack to learner success: Strategies for embedding socio-emotional learning as part of a holistic enabling transition pedagogy - Angela Jones - Joanne Liscandro - Anita Olds	Engaging mature-aged learners: Evaluating the engagement of students in the Open Access Foundation enabling program - Joyleen Christensen	Designing blending learning to support students' digital information literacy - Bettina Schwenger
4:45-5:00pm	Building 170-1015, Lecture Theatre Summary of the Day					
5:00-6:30pm	Carrington's Pump House Networking Function - Drinks and Nibbles					

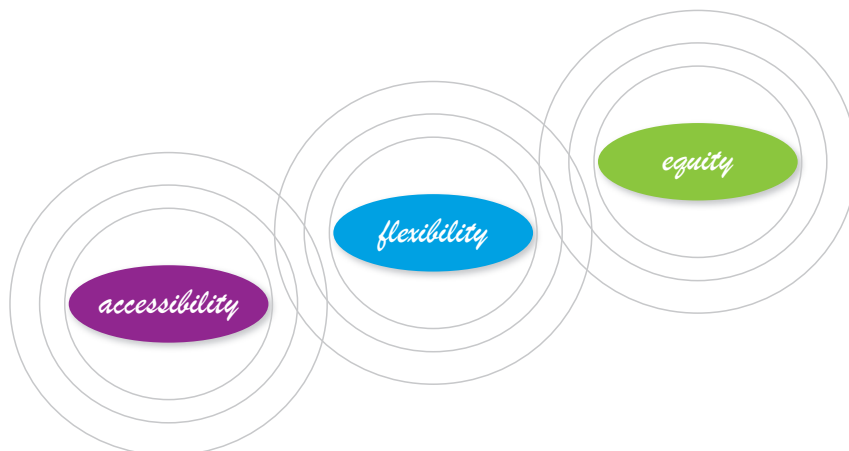
Friday 2 December 2016

8:00am-8:45am	Building 170 - Foyer Registration - Coffee, Tea and Refreshments
8:50-9:50am	Building 170-1016, Lecture Theatre KEYNOTE ADDRESS Professor Sally Kift James Cook University
9:50-10:15am	Building 177 - Wharekai Morning Tea

New Technology
Programme Initiatives
Diversity
Success & Retention
Curriculum Initiatives

SESSION 4	Workshop Bldg. 170-2068	Presentation Bldg. 170-1013	Presentation Bldg. 170-2066	Presentation Bldg. 170-1015	Presentation Bldg. 170-2031
10:20-11:20am	Towards a national quality framework for enabling programs in Australia - George Lambrinidis - Sulay Jallah	Lighting the path(way): articulating curriculum design principles in Open Access enabling programs - Bronwyn Relf - John O'Rourke - Sue Sharp - Nicole Crawford	ACUgate Access - widening participation initiatives: Uni Step Up and Education Reconnect - Catherine O'Donnell - Nicola Cull	A greener, multi-disciplinary and literacy-rich curriculum initiative - Cordelia Lockett	Guaranteeing quality in enabling programs: case studies from two Australian universities - Janet Taylor - David Bull
11:30am-12:30pm	Building 170-1016, Lecture Theatre KEYNOTE ADDRESS Enhancing Learner Success: Overcoming Mental Health Challenges Stephen White Waikato Institute of Technology				
12:30-1:15pm	Building 177 - Wharekai Lunch				

SESSION 5	Presentation Bldg. 170-1016	Presentation Bldg. 170-1064	Presentation Bldg. 170-2068	Presentation Bldg. 170-1015	Presentation Bldg. 170-1013	Presentation Bldg. 170-2066
1:20-1:45pm	Models of support for student wellbeing in enabling programs: comparisons, contrasts and commonalities at four Australian universities - Nicole Crawford - Joanne Liscandro - Angela Jones - Rosalie J. Bunn - Marguerite Westcott	'Show up': Is that the recipe for success? - Karen Seary - Trixie James	Blending the centre: Implementing a centre-wide blended learning strategy for enabling students - Paul Chojenta - Stephen Allen	Bridging the on-line gap in enabling education: Counteracting the disconnect - Sue Sharp - Anne-Maree Hays - Sue Drpich	Developing strategies to enhance the transition experience: Mind the gap - Sue Crossan	An exploration of factors associated with student attrition and success in enabling programs - Anthony Morison
1:50-2:15pm			International foundation studies: Learning not to talk past each other - Jennifer Eldering	Reframing the selfie: The importance of developing confidence in foundation students - Michael Savvas	A place to stand: Creating inclusive environments for diverse gender tertiary students - Catherine Powell	We hear you! Positives Impacts of the Changes made to the STEPS Program - Julie Willans
2:20-2:35pm	Building 170 - Foyer Afternoon tea					
2:40-3:20pm	Building 170-1016, Lecture Theatre INTERACTIVE PANEL How are we meeting students' aspirations?					
3:20-3:30pm	Building 170-1016, Lecture Theatre Conference Summary/Future Conferences					



Conference Information

Registration desk

Registration on Thursday will take place in the wharekai, prior to the welcome in the wharenuī. For the remainder of the conference, the registration desk will be located in Building 170 – follow the signs – to answer your questions.

Keeping to time

As a courtesy to our presenters, please ensure you arrive at each session venue prior to the start of presentations.

Cameras and electronic recording

No electronic recording of presentations is permitted in any form without the express permission of the conference organisers and speakers.

Mobile phones

During all presentations, please switch your phones off or turn them to silent.

Car parking

See map for parking.

Conference catering

All meals will be served in Building 177 – Wharekai. The networking drinks and nibbles function will be held at Carringtons. See map for all venues.

Dietary requirements

Care has been taken to ensure all requested dietary requirements have been catered for. If you specified your dietary requirements when registering, please make yourself known to the catering staff at each refreshment break and advise them of your name.

Name tags

Please wear your name tags at all times during the conference and social events.

Internet access

If you have your own laptop you may use Unitec Institute of Technology wireless service. When searching for a network, please select Unitec Hotspot or Unitec E-learn.

Username: temp5030

Password: temp5030

Smoking

The Unitec campus is smokefree.

Urgent messages and lost property

Please contact the registration desk.

Hotel pick up and drop off shuttle

A courtesy bus has been organised to pick up and drop off guests to the following hotels. Please note the bus will arrive at VR, 401 Queen St at 7:30am on both Thursday and Friday mornings. The bus will pick up guests in the order of hotels below:

VR, 401 Queen St

Stamford, 22-26 Albert St

Grand Windsor, 58-60 Queen St

Waldorf, 40 Beach Rd

The Sebel, 85-89 Customs St West

Auckland City Oaks, 188 Hobson

Airport Shuttle service

The airport shuttle service will depart at 4pm following the final session of the conference.

General Information

Emergencies, medical needs and illnesses

If you have an emergency, you can contact the police, ambulance or fire department by calling 111. For non-urgent health advice you can call Healthline – ph. 0800 611 116.

Bank and ATM machine

There is an ANZ bank and an ATM machine on campus – ask at the registration desk for directions.

Getting around

The LINK Bus is an easy way to get around the city, For information visit:

<https://at.govt.nz/bus-train-ferry/bus-services/link-bus-service>

Taxis and shuttles

Discount Taxi: (09) 529 1000

Auckland Co-op Taxi: (09) 3000 3000

Corporate Cabs: (09) 377 0773

Skybus Airport <> City service: 0800 103 080, <https://www.skybus.co.nz>

Abstracts

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER BY TITLE

A greener, multi-disciplinary and literacy-rich curriculum initiative



Cordelia Lockett

Unitec Institute of Technology

The Level 3 Sustainability course in Unitec's Bridging Education programme (Bridgepoint), is an attempt to blend 'greening the curriculum' with the teaching of essential academic literacies, using a multi-disciplinary approach. Environmental unsustainability – particularly that resulting in runaway climate change – has emerged as the most pressing global challenge facing humanity. Many tertiary institutions – including Unitec Institute of Technology in New Zealand – have demonstrated their commitment to environmental sustainability by implementing a sustainability strategy across their teaching, research, advocacy and campus operations. According to its website, Unitec "will educate students and staff to recognise the importance of sustainability issues and encourage them to join organisations and communities leading change. Sustainability is a core curriculum component for all programmes."

This sustainability course draws from both the social and physical sciences, while weaving in a range of academic study skills including reading, writing and speaking, as well as understanding statistical concepts. A particular emphasis in the course is on the way that the causes and impacts of climate change are distributed inequitably across countries and communities. Research on literacy education strongly suggests that teaching academic literacies and study skills in isolation is less successful than embedding them in relevant and engaging real-life contexts. The course design allows for a number of integrated assessments, including a community-based research project. This workshop will present a snapshot of the course – its key features, innovations and ongoing challenges.

Cordelia Lockett

Cordelia started her career teaching high school English and Drama. Over the twenty-five or so years since then, she has ventured into journalism, sexuality education and health promotion, and is now a lecturer in Bridgepoint (Bridging Education), the bridging education department at Unitec. In 2008, she completed a thesis for her MEd investigating the experiences of mature students at university. Her teaching and research interests include academic literacies, sociology and environmental sustainability.

A place to stand: creating inclusive environments for diverse gender tertiary students



Catherine Powell

Unitec Institute of Technology

This paper outlines some ways that teaching staff can create accessible learning environments for diverse gender tertiary students. Gender diverse people do not fit into the binary model of gender. This is inclusive of, but not limited to, people who are intersex, trans, transsexual, transgender, takatāpui, whakāwahine, tangata ira tane, fa'afafine, akava'ine, fakaleiti, mahu, vaka sa lewa lewa, fiafine, and genderqueer. Regardless of their specific identification, gender diverse people share the experience of challenging traditional gender norms and because of this, face high rates of discrimination and marginalisation. It has been reported in previous research that the diverse gender population often have negative experiences in secondary education and bring those memories and responses with them into tertiary education. This paper reports on the findings of the first New Zealand research project to focus solely on the experiences of diverse gender students in tertiary education. The aim of this qualitative research project was to hear directly from participants about: whether they had experienced discrimination in relation to their gender identity, what kinds of discrimination if any were occurring, and specific strategies that participants believed might support an inclusive tertiary environment for diverse gender students.

The study drew on semi-structured interview data gathered from seven diverse gender tertiary students currently studying around New Zealand. The participants shared many ideas about the strategies that support an inclusive environment for diverse gender students. This paper focusses on those strategies relevant to students at the beginning of their tertiary educational experience. A strong theme that came through in the research was the importance of tertiary staff being educated about diverse gender identities. All the participants talked about the energy needed to educate staff about those who do not fit within the binary gender norms. This paper discusses the different ways that staff take responsibility for educating themselves and the impact this has on students. In addition, the participants also shared how staff can actively demonstrate, through their language and behaviours, awareness of diverse genders. Some examples will be included in this presentation. Another area highlighted in the study, was the policies and practices in tertiary institutions that provide visibility for diverse students. This visibility promotes a sense of belonging and feeling valued for students. This paper suggests areas that tertiary staff could investigate, within their own workplace, to review the level of inclusion that is occurring for diverse gender students. It is estimated that one in 20 New Zealand young people identify with one of the many diverse gender identities. Implementing these strategies into all teaching and learning spaces may help the retention and success of this increasingly visible population.

Catherine Powell

Catherine has worked at Unitec since 2008 as a programme leader and lecturer for the Level 4 programme Certificate in Community Skills and is passionate about creating inclusive bridging programmes for students. She is a founding member of Queer@Unitec (2010) and the Unitec ALLY network (2012). Both groups work to create an inclusive environment for those with diverse gender and sexual identities. Catherine has recently submitted her MEd thesis, upon which this paper is based.

A quest to tame the beast: Involving eLearning and social media to improve accessibility, flexibility and equity



Hannetjie Meintjes

Manukau Institute of Technology

Foundation and bridging education providers constantly rethink their ways of thinking and doing in a quest to provide improved opportunities for more students to take up further studies and to assist them to persevere long enough to complete their qualifications. Providers are unable to remove all the barriers to learning that lead to disengagement, high levels of absenteeism and the risk of giving up. Barriers related to factors outside the control of the providers include under-preparedness, low prior educational success, socio-economic- and family circumstances and commitments. Providers can however try to improve accessibility, flexibility and equity by removing procedural barriers set up by themselves. The modes and timing of delivery, dialogue and assessment are major issues over which providers have large degrees of control.

In 2014, a process to develop a blended level 3 health science course started. This was an attempt to tame the hardly manageable “beastly” labour-intensive course that evolved over time while simultaneously improving its accessibility, flexibility and equitability for students. This course currently uses two online sessions per week (preferably on-campus), one lab session and one face-to-face session and is easily managed. Flexibility was improved by allowing students the freedom to control their own learning processes by pacing themselves within set time limits. Suitable online resources were selected, developed (like ebooks and computer-marked formative assessments for all assessment criteria) and organised around course outcomes. Online summative assessments could be done asynchronously in class when students were ready. This allowed success, for example, for students with temporary family duties. Up to 28% of the students in some classes were without home computer internet access. Measures to deal with these accessibility and equitability issues included the use of social media.

This presentation explains the finer details regarding the processes of improving the accessibility, flexibility and equitability for students while making the course easier to manage and deliver. Examples of student work and results of questionnaires and surveys investigating student and lecturer experience are shared. Since the traditional ways of thinking and doing are challenged by these new possibilities, numerous issues like a common understanding among lecturers of the use of asynchronous assessments and procedures for quality control need rethinking and adjustment.

Hannetjie Meintjes

Hannetjie Meintjes taught Biology, Physical sciences, Mathematics and Technology at various levels during her career. Currently she is a lecturer at the School of Foundation Education at MIT. Her interest in curriculum development was awakened when she developed a very enjoyable and successful Problem Based Learning course for Technology Education for PGCE students from scratch. Fostering creative thinking by explicitly targeting this aspect in curriculum design was the theme of her PhD thesis. This sparked interest in her current research, namely the use of eLearning in encouraging cognitive development and independent and self-directed learning. Utilising a blended design she took up the challenge of repackaging a very labour-intensive teacher-driven science course at MIT to try to enhance flexible, accessible and equitable opportunities for students.

Academic adaptation experiences of Indian international students: English language and cross-cultural barriers in an EAP program at an Australian university



Dr Sang-Soon Park

Open Access College, University of Southern Queensland

Over the last few decades, there has been an increasing trend for international students from non-English speaking background countries to study abroad in English-speaking destinations. This international education industry, and its market, has been primarily shared by the UK, USA, Australia and Canada. Australia has played a key part in the provision of high quality education to international students. It appears to be that the inflow patterns of international students in the Australian higher education sector are influenced by: their home countries' economic status, social and political climates, and the effects of the global environment. The latest and most prominent pattern of international students' engagement with Australian higher education is the rapid expansion in the number of Indian international students applying to and studying in Australian universities. This trend has more than doubled over the past year. This implies that the enabling education sector in particular needs to take this new trend into deep consideration to improve the quality of transitional education for this particular cohort.

The main aim of this study is to investigate a wide range of academic adaptation experiences of Indian international students, particularly those who are or were enrolled in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP II) program at the University of Southern Queensland. The study will explore the uniqueness of this particular cohort's problems and their adaptations to academic contexts in the Australian higher education system, something that has not previously been given much consideration. Whilst encountering a new academic environment in an Australian university, Indian international students from diverse language backgrounds experience various types of difficult English language and cross-cultural issues. Further, the study will also explore how the students adapt to resolve such difficulties and barriers to continue their study. It will also discuss ways of assisting this particular cohort for the successful completion of their further study at Australian universities.

Dr Sang-Soon Park

Sang-Soon Park, Ed.D., works as a lecturer in academic communication skills at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. As a course examiner for international pathway programs, he is involved in curriculum development and teaching courses for international students seeking an entry to degree programs. His research interests include global education and international students' language development.

ACUgate ACCESS – Widening participation initiatives: Uni Step Up and Education Reconnect



Catherine O'Donnell and Nicola Cull

Equity Pathways, Australian Catholic University

Since 2011, Australian Catholic University (ACU) has conducted Access programs as part of the national ACUgate outreach framework. ACUgate is a Higher Education Participation and Partnership Program (HEPPP) initiative so was formulated and implemented under HEPPP guidelines. The programs target specifically low socio economic students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students from remote and regional areas. The objectives of Access programs are to provide academic support to assist students to develop higher order numeracy and literacy skills necessary for successful university entrance, offer a range of pathways into university other than by the traditional ATAR entry mode and provide opportunities for all those despite their educational background, to aspire to higher education. This workshop examines two particular Access programs, Uni Step Up and Education Reconnect. Uni Step Up offers Year 12 students the chance to undertake a first year university unit/s of study. Education Reconnect targets two categories of students. Those students who have achieved an ATAR but for a particular set of circumstances have not been able to start a university degree and those students who have not achieved an ATAR, may have worked for some time, may have done a non-university course and now wish to pursue a degree.

The workshop will include ACU presenting:

- How the programs fit the Access objectives especially in the equity environment
- Participating partner schools and organizations
- Modes of delivery
- Student results and outcomes
- Student and teacher perspectives
- Future and challenges of the programs.

Followed by an open discussion with workshop participants especially sharing practice and future of programs of this nature as enabling type programs.

Catherine O'Donnell

Catherine O'Donnell is the Associate Director of Equity Pathways, Australian Catholic University. Catherine has held senior positions in secondary schools in Victoria and New South Wales. Catherine's brief in 2010 was to establish the Equity Pathways unit at Australian Catholic University. Equity Pathways operates within the directorate of First Peoples and Equity Pathways. The Equity Pathways unit consists of 17 staff members, has formed over 200 school partnerships in low socio-economic communities, facilitates programs to more than 16,000 students annually and has become an integral part of ACU Mission and Vision.

Nicola Cull

Nicola Cull has been an educator for over 15 years. Her work includes teaching and working with diverse communities in both the catholic and public education systems in the UK, Asia and Australia. Nicola was awarded the Elizabeth Mary Dodd prize in Education for her Masters research on 'Inclusive Education'. Nicola is Coordinator Equity Pathways at Australian Catholic University.

An exploration of factors associated with student attrition and success in enabling programs



Anthony Morison

English Language & Foundation Studies Centre

Dr Kym Cowley

Business School, University of Newcastle

University-based enabling programs provide a tertiary pathway for up to 20% of undergraduate enrolments at Australian universities. Enabling programs have traditionally experienced higher rates of student attrition than undergraduate degree programs and this area has received increasing academic focus in recent years. Attrition from enabling programs and the resulting financial and opportunity costs to students, universities and society at large is an important issue deserving research attention. This research project aimed to investigate the factors that impacted on the attrition of students from enabling programs and compared their experience with those students who successfully completed the program. The study used a qualitative methodology involving individual participant interviews with former students of enabling programs at the University of Newcastle (UON). The qualitative interviews with 16 respondents supported the existing research into the complexity of student attrition. The dominant themes emerging from the data broadly reflected the four factors identified in the extant literature; time pressures on students, personal circumstances and life events, the effective use of student support services, as well as levels of social and academic engagement. The use of qualitative interviews however provided additional insight into the operation of factors contributing to attrition in enabling programs. Enabling programs are very different to undergraduate study and even VET programs. They are neither a qualification by themselves, nor vocational training, although they can be perceived as a form of training for entry to higher education. In this way, they are an opportunity for students to gauge their capacity and suitability for tertiary study. Hence, enabling program enrolment is seen as a test of personal identity as well as academic identity. To complete an enabling program is not necessarily the goal for students, as evidenced by one respondent's comment "it showed me how to fit study into my life". The goal may be to prove oneself capable of undergraduate study. This was borne out by the finding that a number of respondents enrolled in enabling programs to develop their self-confidence. Non-completion of an enabling program may not be perceived as a failure, but just an indication that one is not yet ready for tertiary study. The reasons for enrolling in an enabling program are far more complex than achieving an ATAR. In this light, the findings of this study take on a new significance. Enabling programs are a very personal experience for students. This study echoes the results of previous studies, that enabling programs change lives, giving participants a second chance at a more fulfilling life. It further provides insight into the unique perceptions and motivations of enabling students. The paper concludes that any attempts to reduce attrition in enabling programs must focus on developing more personal interventions with students as early as possible in the academic program. These actions aim at addressing students' time management skills, the provision of more flexible study options and facilitating evening and mature age student support, as well as addressing students' levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy. The study lends further understanding to the reasons behind student attrition in enabling programs and develops a number of pragmatic actions to improve retention in these programs.

Anthony Morison

Anthony Morison is a lecturer with the Open Foundation enabling program at the University of Newcastle. Anthony conducts on-campus and online courses in business management. He is currently completing a PhD in management.

Best practices supporting indigenous student engagement in enabling programs and beyond



**Associate Professor Sharron King, Tanya Weiler,
Stephen Dowdy and Myfanwy Tilley**

UniSA College, University of South Australia

The UniSA College Indigenous Pathways Participation Program is a tailored outreach enabling program being delivered at three regional centres in South Australia. The IPP Program specifically targets Aboriginal Australians living in regional and remote South Australian communities and was developed through consultation with community leaders and representatives, Aboriginal community workers, employers, and health workers. The IPP Program was developed as part of UniSA's strategy to widen participation in higher education and in response to the Federal Government's focus on increasing Aboriginal Australians' participation.

Over half of the Aboriginal Australian university student population has entered higher education through enabling programs. The number of Aboriginal Australians enrolling in and completing undergraduate qualifications, however, remains unsatisfactorily low at just over 1.0% of the Aboriginal Australian population). Approximately 65% of Aboriginal Australians live in regional and remote communities, and these Australians are further underrepresented in higher education. The barriers to access and participation in higher education affecting Aboriginal Australians form a considerable body of research, however, the development of best practices for fostering greater participation and attainment by indigenous students is limited, and no less so in the enabling sector (6). Research suggests that the provision of enabling outreach programs tailored on a community basis can increase participation, and the 2015 'Path+ Ways' report by Fredericks et al. presents a conceptual model intended to inform the development of best practices in Indigenous enabling programs in Australia.

The UniSA IPP Program is a fee-free program that commenced in January 2016 and is delivered across 18 months. Students will complete nine consecutive units which cover the skills required for successful university-level study. Each unit comprises a mix of intensive face to face teaching (six days) and three hour tutorial sessions during alternate weeks. Additional mentoring and support are provided by local tutors and designated Project Coordinators.

The 'Path+ Ways' report identified a number of recurring factors impacting on and shaping teachers' delivery of course material and on students' experiences of access programs, broadly including: cultural understanding, social/cultural, emotional and practical determinants and influences on learning, IT competency, study skills, and levels of staff/mentor support. Stemming from these was the identification of a range of best practice foundations based on strategic awareness, developing student resilience, a sense of belonging, and indigenising the curriculum.

This workshop will share the lessons learned from the implementation of the UniSA IPP program and workshop participants will be invited to contribute their ideas and experiences of design and delivery of enabling programs for Australian and New Zealand indigenous people in order to construct the building blocks of a best practice model.

There will be particular focus on:

- the critical factors in ensuring success of indigenous students;
- ensuring program sustainability in relation to indigenous communities' needs, institutional resources, time, and changing cultural interfaces;
- developing strategies to assist students develop self-awareness, time management, learning strategies and motivation.

Associate Professor Sharron King

Associate Professor Sharron King is the Academic Director and Deputy Head of UniSA College. The College provides a Foundation Studies Program and a range of Diplomas as enabling pathways to university degrees. Sharron's background is in Health Sciences and she has a PhD in Higher Education. Her research interests focus primarily on students' transition, health and well-being at university and widening access to university for students who face educational disadvantage. Recent projects include an OLT funded project on staff and student's expectations and experiences of university study and a NCSEHE project exploring the factors that enable success for 'first in family' students.

Tanya Weiler

Tanya Weiler is the Program Coordinator - Regions, including the Indigenous Participation Pathways Program (IPP) at UniSA College. She has recently developed new courses in academic literacy and introductory psychology for Foundation Studies students. Tanya is passionate about motivating students to improve their language, critical thinking and communication skills in order to better engage in the world around them, and thereby make their own contribution. Tanya is currently working on research into the impact of wellbeing strategies and motivation on students in enabling programs.

Stephen Dowdy

Stephen Dowdy is the inaugural Head of UniSA College which offers university-enabling programs and partnership programs with school and community groups. Stephen is an executive member of the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia. Stephen's commitment to inclusion has seen him receive commendations for his work as an educator, including in 2001 the Award of a Centenary Medal and in 2009 the inaugural Australian Council of Educational Leadership Medal (South Australian division).

Myfanwy Tilley

Myfanwy Tilley is the Research Coordinator at the UniSA College. Her current research involvement at the College includes researching experiences of enabling program students transitioning into undergraduate programs, the experiences of rural and remote Indigenous students in the College Foundation Studies program, and unlocking education pathways for women. Myfanwy has experience in research across education, health, economics and legal spheres.

Blending the centre: Implementing a centre-wide blended learning strategy for enabling students



Evonne Irwin, Paul Chojenta and Dr Stephen Allen

English Language and Foundation Studies Centre, University of Newcastle

Over the last decade, the adoption of digital technologies as a way of enhancing teaching and learning experiences in higher education has grown significantly. The reasons for this growth are complex and can be attributed in part to institutions responding to the increasing connectedness to technology of students and to increased student demand for flexible learning opportunities. In an uncapped student market, universities may also seek answers in digital educational technologies to the problem of delivering effective learning and teaching to larger cohorts of students.

Digital technologies are also often seen as a means of increasing student engagement and satisfaction. Whatever the reasons, higher education institutions are committing to digitally enhanced teaching and learning activities in their strategic plans. However, at the course level, implementing this shift is not without its challenges. Changes to teaching and learning practice imposed as top-down policies may be viewed with suspicion by teaching staff. Further, staff may be understandably resistant to changing their practice if sufficient professional development and technical support is not made available, or if digital technologies are not seen to offer pedagogical improvements.

This workshop seeks to illuminate the five-year 'Blended Learning Strategy' of one Centre in a regional Australian university which delivers enabling programs. As enabling educators it is our common purpose to prepare our students for what they will meet in their undergraduate studies, be they academic practices, disciplinary knowledges and methods of teaching and learning delivery. The Blended Learning Strategy's rationale to prepare students for technology-enabled learning will be explored as well as its purposeful utilisation of blended learning 'champions' to pilot and showcase initiatives rather than impose blended learning targets on all courses delivered in the programs. The focus of this workshop will be on the collaborative processes involved in embedding blended learning in existing traditional lecture/tutorial courses and the potential pedagogical benefits, as well as the constraints experienced and opportunities gained by the process and the technology. In showcasing the work of our blended learning champions, we hope to provide a space for reflection on current practices and feedback on future directions.

Paul Chojenta

Paul Chojenta is a course co-ordinator and academic advisor in the Newstep program at the University of Newcastle. Paul earned his undergraduate degree in Communications at the University of Newcastle in 2001 then completed an honours degree in Film Studies the following year. From 2004 to 2010 he taught Film and Media courses at TAFE NSW, while completing his Masters in Film Studies in 2009. He has been working for the Newstep program since 2006, as a tutor, lecturer and academic advisor and has developed multiple humanities courses offered across the program. He has been a regular presenter at enabling education conferences, focusing on student engagement and support.

Dr Stephen Allen

Stephen Allen has worked at the University of Newcastle, teaching mathematics enabling and undergraduate courses for over a decade. In this time he has taught all levels of mathematics from beginner to advanced and has always been committed to creating teaching resources for use outside of the lecture, including the creation of new software tools where none previously existed. Stephen is very keen to see universities move away from the traditional lecture format and start adopting newer approaches that benefit a greater number of students and address increasingly higher rates of student attrition.

Bridging programs, teaching and technology for 21st Century learning



Anthea Fudge, Jennifer Stokes and Tanya Weiler

UniSA College, University of South Australia

Technology has shifted the ways educators teach and students learn. Increasingly, there is an expectation of educators to deliver educational content in an engaging and technologically relevant fashion to a mostly 'screen-committed' and often (though not always) tech-savvy student audience in a way that will achieve successful course outcomes. Whilst this is an exciting space to both work and learn in, it can create anxiety for both academics and students as expectations change.

Technological advances present a number of challenges to educators who may not, for a range of reasons, have the capacity, experience or time to utilise or keep up with changes. However, the opportunity does exist for educators to capitalise on their students' screen expertise and familiarity with digital tools by embedding digital learning in a way that enhances participation in higher education and works to ensure that students feel comfortable within the educational space.

Another challenge arising from technological advance is for educators to prepare their students for hypothetical jobs in potential industries of the future. Some anticipate a 'conceptual age' is emerging (Pink 2005), where right-brained thinking will be at the forefront of desirable employee skill sets, as automation makes some occupations obsolete.

The interrelationships between educator, student and technology are crucial in meeting these challenges. The educator is needed to facilitate their students' ability to learn using technology, and to this end, engagement with technology is essential in order to experience and profit from the student's perspective. In doing so the educator must first acknowledge that any gaps in their knowledge of evolving technologies must be bridged.

This interactive workshop will focus on key technologies and learning theories utilised by members of the UniSA College enabling educators. We invite you to share your views and experiences of blended learning to explore ideas on how technology can be used to enhance the student experience in learning. Ways of integrating these strategies into multiple classes will be explored using the UniSA College student experience as a model. We will discuss how we best embed digital strategies within our enabling courses and identify our best practice indicators in this area.

We will also explore what happens when technology fails and what can be done in these circumstances: Will students still be able to learn key concepts, knowledge points and have a quality learning experience?

Future work places and the technological skills of enabling students must be considered in this conversation. Educators must be willing to embrace digital learning to best prepare students for the inevitable technology developments to come. Through modelling an inquiring attitude with students, we believe we can further prepare them for an unfamiliar future.

Open discussion is encouraged; bring your digital device, curiosity and thoughts on this exciting and sometimes daunting space.

Dr Anthea Fudge

Dr Anthea Fudge is an early career educator with a keen interest in science education. With a background in chemistry and physics, Anthea is passionate about encouraging students to engage with the sciences and sparking an interest in learning and discovery. Having recently completed her PhD, Anthea is excited to expand science education within UniSA College whilst also exploring the impact of blended learning/digital technologies upon the delivery of science related courses within the enabling sector and STEM education.

Tanya Weiler

Tanya Weiler is the Program Coordinator - Regions, including the Indigenous Participation Pathways Program (IPP) at UniSA College. She has recently developed new courses in academic literacy and introductory psychology for Foundation Studies students. Tanya is passionate about motivating students to improve their language, critical thinking and communication skills in order to better engage in the world around them, and thereby make their own contribution. Tanya is currently working on research into the impact of wellbeing strategies and motivation on students in enabling programs.

Bridging the on-line gap in enabling education: Counteracting the disconnect



Sue Sharp, Anne Maree Hays and Sue Drpich

Centre of Learning and Teaching, Edith Cowan University

The Edith Cowan University (ECU) University Preparation Course (UniPrep) in Perth, Western Australia, provides one of Australia's largest alternative-entry programs for future undergraduate students, who do not have the confidence or qualifications required for direct entry to university. This diverse cohort is often new to university expectations and protocols, with limited knowledge of online learning systems. They tend to lack confidence due to past negative learning experiences, limited opportunity to engage meaningfully with post-secondary education or are returning to higher education after a long gap. Some students have actually achieved the required entry qualification, but lack confidence in their ability to negotiate tertiary education.

UniPrep offers on-campus, on-line and flexible delivery modes and even with large student numbers, retention and transition rates in UniPrep compare very favourably with other Australian universities. This is particularly true of the on-campus mode with high retention and good pass rates. Despite these figures, UniPrep has similar issues to those reported in the literature, with attrition rates among on-line learners being significantly higher than on-campus rates.

This paper reports on the extension of ECU's UniPrep enabling model of curriculum, based on cohesion, coherence and connectedness to the on-line environment. This intentionally designed curriculum for the on-line cohort, includes an engaging and purposeful curriculum with mediated support, awareness of and timely access to support services and most importantly strategies to develop a sense of belonging, competence and confidence. Strategies designed to extend the culture of care and community provided in the on-campus mode to the on-line learners, along with a targeted approach to students at educational risk, are together, having some positive impact on retention of these students. These strategies are described and evidence is provided from both the student perspective and from university retention and transition data that we are beginning to bridge the gap for these enabling students, by countering the disconnect they often feel, in an on-line environment.

Sue Sharp

Sue Sharp, is a Senior Lecturer and Course Coordinator of the Edith Cowan University Preparation Course (UniPrep). Sue is a long term Teacher Educator with over 30 years experience in teaching, and curriculum design and delivery. Most recently she led the re-development of the ECU University Preparation Course. With a strong student focus, Sue's passion is to enhance opportunities, particularly for those from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, through relevant and empowering learning experiences and the building of learning communities. Research, review and a strong vision underpins the UniPrep, curriculum design and implementation and has led to the development of a context specific UniPrep Enabling Model. Sue's other research interests include first year experience and the design and delivery of enabling curriculum and pedagogy.

Anne-Maree Hays

Anne-Maree Hays, is a Lecturer and Unit Coordinator in the University Preparation Course (UniPrep) at Edith Cowan University. Anne-Maree has experience as a Teacher Educator, with an interest in literacy, language and English as an additional language. Recently, Anne-Maree has been an active member of the UniPrep development and teaching team which has allowed for further development of a student centred teaching philosophy, enabling students to make further study and career choices from a place of greater confidence and knowledge.

Sue Drpich

Sue Drpich is the lead Support Officer within the University Preparation Course (UniPrep) at Edith Cowan University. As part of this role, Sue is responsible in organizing support services for up to 2000 students each semester. Sue has a special interest in supporting disadvantaged and marginalized adult learners as they commence tertiary study. Sue comes to the UniPrep team with over 30 years' experience in Education.

Building on identifiable common student experiences to enable success



Emily Saavedra and Dr Leonard Sanders

Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) Massey University

In line with current predictions, student numbers are continuing to grow in the area of pre-degree Foundation education. Foundation education is fundamental to providing a context within which to address a number of the key priorities identified in the current New Zealand Tertiary Education Strategy. In order to meet these priorities, there is a need to gain a clearer understanding of the particular demographic of Foundation education students. This paper presents findings of the first phase of a project designed to identify common themes and experiences across this demographic at an established tertiary institution in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The research utilises a diagnostic task implemented as part of the beginning of semester activities. Students self-report in the form of written narratives on their prior personal experiences, challenges and educational background. The task has a dual purpose, in that it serves as a personal introduction as well as a mechanism through which teachers can identify potential individual and collective teaching points. In this paper, the researchers will discuss the preliminary findings of thematic and iterative analysis that was carried out on the written narratives. Given the diverse cultural backgrounds of some students, participants were also offered the opportunity to expand on what they had written, through informal (semi-structured) interviews. These discussions afford the opportunity for students to further elaborate on how they have experienced challenges and success within personal and education contexts. The impact of these experiences on success and achievement are explored.

Collected data has helped us align identified trends and variations to areas of support services currently available to students and teachers within our institution and wider community. Factors and early indicators that may necessitate additional areas of support are considered. The effect of these factors on student success and retention is discussed. This research enables us to better understand the demographic that is currently accessing bridging programmes so as to ensure accessibility, flexibility and sustained equity within and across our foundation programmes.

Emily Saavedra

Emily Saavedra is an Academic Coordinator for Foundation Education at Massey University, Albany. Prior to joining Massey University, she has taught in a variety of contexts across South America, Asia, the Middle East and New Zealand. Her current interests include inter-cultural intelligence, blended learning, curriculum design, and supporting students to achieve their potential within an academic context. She is currently enrolled in doctoral studies at the University of Southern Queensland with a particular interest in the impact of mobile devices in face to face and blended tertiary learning environments.

Dr Leonard Sanders

Leonard Sanders is currently a Senior English Language Teacher for Foundation Education at Massey University, PaCE, Auckland campus. He has a PhD in English and Cultural Studies from Massey University and is currently teaching English for Academic Purposes, Study Skills, and Foundation Social Sciences. Leonard's teaching career includes over twenty years in tertiary institutions in Japan, mostly at Komazawa University, Tokyo. He has experience in various roles within the tertiary context and is especially interested in cross-cultural interactions, media studies, and blended learning.

Designing blended learning to support students' digital information literacy



Bettina Schwenger

Unitec Institute of Technology

Embedding academic literacies in the face-to-face context can be a significant challenge for teachers with whom I have been working. Designing blended learning that helps students acquire, for example, information literacy adds a level of complexity with which not all teachers are entirely comfortable. In this research, two teachers explore how the online space can be integrated with their face-to-face work, especially using whanaungatanga as one of their leading principles. I have designed resources and have collated some research-based considerations that we are exploring together this year. The study merges several aspects relevant to tertiary learning and teaching, including how to integrate online experiences with face-to-face learning appropriately and how to support students' digital information literacy as required in their studies. Educational Design Research can support this work well and complements the principles of kaupapa Māori theory, which guide my research.

This presentation will be run through a collaborative approach. After presenting main points about supporting digital information literacy through a blended learning design and some preliminary findings, participants will discuss their ideas in small groups before sharing with the whole group.

Bettina Schwenger

Bettina Schwenger is Senior Lecturer at Te Puna Ako, Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand, and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK. She supports colleagues in curriculum design and integrating online and face-to-face for student-centred blended learning.

Developing strategies to enhance the transition experience: Mind the gap



Sue Crossan

Te Miro & Bridgepoint Networks, Unitec Institute of Technology

The nursing pathway has been a popular choice for bridging students at Unitec for a number of years. Recent changes to delivery at both bridging level and in the first semester of the Bachelor of Nursing degree have led to students struggling in certain areas of the first year degree programme courses. This paper reports on two obstacles faced by students transitioning from the bridging nursing pathway programme to the degree programme. The course students appear to struggle with the most in their first semester of the nursing degree is Anatomy and Physiology. While, in their second semester, the most difficult course appears to be Bioscience. The most obvious reasons for this are that at the bridging level students are not taught human biology and they also do not have any mathematics in either their bridging programme or in the first semester of their degree. The identification of these problem areas has led to the development of strategies to make the transition from the bridging programme to the degree programme more seamless. This paper will discuss the strategies that have been put in place to help students progress successfully.

Transition pedagogy sits alongside bridging pedagogy, with its focus on supporting students from diverse backgrounds to succeed in higher education. Initiatives to help the transition of bridging students into the nursing degree programme are part of the good practice surrounding this pathway. Staff in the bridging nursing pathway are focused on student success and aware of the responsibility that bridging educators have to ensure their students, many of whom will have studied in bridging programmes for two semesters prior to entering the nursing degree, are well prepared.

Sue Crossan

Sue Crossan's experience of teaching in inner city high schools in the UK led to an interest in the teaching of literacy in all subject areas. Since immigrating to New Zealand fourteen years ago, Sue has studied for a Masters in Applied Languages at Auckland University of Technology. Her thesis focussed on the embedding of literacy across the curriculum in high schools in Auckland. Sue joined Unitec seven years ago as a lecturer in Foundation Studies, teaching Academic Study Skills on the nursing pathway. In 2015, Sue took a secondment as a lecturer on the Common Semester which students on health and social sciences degrees take in their first semester. Sue is now an Academic Leader and lecturer in Unitec's Te Miro Transdisciplinary Network.

Enabling the enablers: Using ‘big data’ to identify ways of improving student performance and engagement in the Tertiary Enabling Program at Charles Darwin University



James L. Valentine and George Lambrinidis

School of Academic Language and Learning, Charles Darwin University

The rapid growth of online learning and widespread use of learning management systems such as Blackboard and Moodle has resulted in increasingly large amounts of data being captured about students' digital interactions. Making use of this "big data" is an emerging field known as learning analytics (*Ferguson, 2012*) which is commonly defined as "...the measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimising learning and the environments in which it occurs" (*Long et al., 2011*). Such analyses can be as simple as plotting data on a graph (e.g. *MacNeill & Ellis, 2013*) to complex statistical techniques run by custom developed software packages (e.g. *Course Signals at Purdue University; Arnold & Pistilli, 2012*). This paper discusses two examples of how data captured during use of Blackboard (CDU's online learning management system) by students enrolled in the Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP) at Charles Darwin University (CDU) is being used to investigate student performance and engagement, particularly for students studying externally online.

In the first example, we investigate the relationship between the academic performance of TEP students and the time of their initial engagement with Blackboard within individual units. Using a series of simple graphs it is possible to easily visualise correlations between time of engagement and academic results for different student cohorts such as internal and external students. The results are providing insights into when intervention should be provided to encourage TEP students to engage with their studies online to help maximise their chances of successfully completing units they are enrolled in.

In the second, more complex example, a novel approach is taken to analyse student engagement. Two biodiversity measures used to calculate extinction and origination rates of species as a function of time were utilised to calculate the rates at which students disengaged and engaged with their online studies each week during a standard 15 week semester. This analysis is enabling us to better identify any particular point(s) during the semester that TEP students engage with their online studies and perhaps more importantly, particular points when TEP students disengage from their online studies.

Measuring, collecting, analysing and reporting of student digital interactions has the potential to enable educators to better understand their students and hence implement evidence based measures aimed at improving student success and retention.

James Valentine

James has a long standing interest in science and science teaching. After completing a BSc with Honours and a PhD in palaeontology, James took up a lecturing position at Macquarie University where he was responsible for teaching palaeontology, biology and geology to undergraduate students and postgraduate students. It was during this time that James developed a passion for teaching students about science. This led James to relocate from Sydney to Darwin three and a half years ago to take up a bioscience / maths lecturing position in the Tertiary Enabling Program at Charles Darwin University.

George Lambrinidis

George Lambrinidis is the Theme Leader for the Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP) at Charles Darwin University, Australia. TEP is the main pathway for mature age students who do not have the requisite background for undergraduate study and many come from diverse backgrounds. His area of research interest includes pathways programs and in particular ways in which to improve quality learning outcomes, especially for external students studying online. His current research focusses on developing strategies to improve the retention and success of students through improved engagement. He is currently working with his team to implement the new accredited version of the program in 2017.

Engaging mature-aged learners: Evaluating the engagement of students in the open access Open Foundation enabling program



Dr Joyleen Christensen and Dr Jaime W Hunt

English Language and Foundation Studies Centre, University of Newcastle

This paper documents a research project on student engagement that was conducted in the Open Foundation enabling program offered by the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre at the University of Newcastle, Australia.

While most of the national and institutional studies (*e.g. Baik, Naylor & Arkoudis, 2015*) on student engagement in Australia completed to date have focused on undergraduate students, none appears to focus on students in open access enabling programs. This paper presents findings from surveys aimed at open access enabling students which uses some questions adapted from national instruments in Australia, the UK, and the US (*e.g. Coates, 2009; Yorke & Longden, 2008; NSSE, 2007*) to enable benchmarking,

The purpose of the research was to assess how much students enrolled in the on-campus and online Open Foundation programs are engaged in learning. National and international studies with undergraduate students have shown a close relationship between student engagement, retention, and success. However, a recently released national report on university student experience notes a “clear negative association between age and learner engagement,” with mature-aged students being characterised as have relatively low levels of student engagement (*2014 UES National Report, 2015, 22*). Therefore, this study aims to determine the nature of the relationship between engagement, retention, and success for the mature-aged students participating in programs at the enabling level.

As part of the research, students studying in the on-campus and online modes of the Open Foundation program were invited to participate in the project by completing an anonymous questionnaire about their own engagement in learning. The survey covered a range of relevant factors that impact upon student engagement, including: student perceptions of teaching and support, barriers to learning, motivation, and career aspiration, a number of which asked students to evaluate their experience of various support and student engagement initiatives offered as part the program. Results indicate that factors such as paid employment, first in family status, and time pressure have the most significant impact upon engagement in learning of students from equity groups typically underrepresented in tertiary education, factors also supported in the findings on retention of enabling students (*Hodges, et al., 2013*).

Dr Joyleen Christensen

Joyleen Christensen is the Program Convenor of Foundation Studies programs at the Central Coast campus of the University of Newcastle (UON), Australia. She is also a Lecturer in film and literature in UON’s English Language and Foundation Studies Centre (ELFSC). She balances discipline-based research with investigations into enabling education, teaching pedagogy, student support initiatives, mentoring, and teacher/student efficacy. A key focus of her current research is examining the engagement of students within the ELFSC’s Open Foundation enabling program.

Engineering curriculum: Pedagogy supporting students in a university pathway program



Leanne M. Yard

Western Sydney University The College

Western Sydney University, The College is a wholly owned entity of the Western Sydney University, providing alternate pathways to higher education through Diploma Programs. The Diploma in Engineering has been offered since 2009. Successful completion of the Diploma in Engineering guarantees students entry into the second year of a Bachelor of Engineering program. The vast majority of students entering the Diploma in Engineering program did not achieve the required entry criteria to gain direct entry into a Bachelor of Engineering program.

The Diploma in Engineering pedagogical model is designed to optimise student outcomes with a cohort of students who are often the first in their families to study at university and who often come from low socio-economic backgrounds. Many of these students will also not have studied the calculus-based mathematics and physics usually expected of university level engineering students.

The key aspect of the pedagogical model is a strategic approach to course and unit design with embedded support initiatives designed to facilitate student success. The course and unit design seeks to improve student retention and engagement whilst developing the content knowledge and skills necessary for study at university level in Engineering.

Student results show that the pedagogical model employed in the Diploma in Engineering is effective in providing opportunities for students who would not otherwise have gained access to university, therefore contributing to the widening participation agenda in Australia.

This paper will outline the key aspects of the pedagogical model, describe the embedded strategic intervention and provide evidence of the success of students both in their Diploma studies and after transition to the Bachelor of Engineering program at University.

Flipping the classroom: Is it a flipping good idea, or a flop?



Trixie James and Hermina Conradie

Academic Learning Services Unit, CQUniversity

Advocates for the Flipped Model Classroom (FMC) suggest that through the implementation of this reverse teaching model, students will gain a deeper understanding of the concepts being taught and that the learning environment will change from passive to active through interactive pedagogical approaches. In 2014, this approach to teaching was trialled in the Preparation Skills for University course on the Bundaberg Campus of CQUniversity within the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) program. The goal of the research was to evaluate this model of teaching in order to identify the benefits and pitfalls to the students, the lecturers and the university as a whole. Data was collected through four sources: GoSoapbox, student evaluations, class rolls, and lecturer reflections. Peer interaction was identified as possibly the most positive element of the classroom atmosphere and students as well as lecturers found that students felt empowered to step out of their comfort zones and became more engaged with the content. However, from the educators' perspectives, there were obvious gaps from the written explanations to the actual application in the classroom. The implementation of the FMC was not based on a clearly defined framework and the researchers suggest that this may lead to this approach being introduced haphazardly. Therefore, it is recommended that a framework be established that will safeguard this model of teaching to ensure this approach to classroom instruction remains consistent whilst remaining interactive and engaging.

Trixie James

Trixie James is a lecturer within the STEPS program at CQUniversity on the Bundaberg Campus. Trixie's research interests centre on the support and engagement of under-represented adults in the tertiary sector, with special interest in student engagement, quality teaching practices and positive psychology. Her research has culminated in the design and creation of a new teaching framework, Higher Expectation Framework. She completed a Masters of Learning Management in Executive Leadership with a minor thesis that investigated enabling students' successful transition into undergraduate studies. Her research has been shared internationally at the Netherlands and New Zealand, and at various conferences within Australia.

Guaranteeing quality in enabling programs: Case studies from two Australian universities



Janet A Taylor

Southern Cross University

David Bull

University of Southern Queensland

Although successfully operating in Australian universities for over 40 years, questions have recently been raised about how enabling programs maintain quality. In Australia, universities are classed as self-accrediting bodies under the Australian Tertiary Education Quality Enhancement Agency (TEQSA). Accordingly, universities accredit their own courses and assure the quality of their offerings and practices in line with TEQSA standards. This presentation describes the processes and practices that two universities have put in place to guarantee the quality of their programs and the associated teaching and learning standards. University of Southern Queensland has offered enabling program for close to 40 years while Southern Cross University has delivered programs for approximately 30 years. Yet both universities utilize award program governance structures and protocols including Academic Board approvals, annual course reporting, regular external reviews and rigorous assessment moderation practices. Taken together these practices allow the universities to be confident that students encounter a consistently excellent learning experience which leads to future academic success in their undergraduate studies.

Janet Taylor

Janet Taylor is Professor and Director of SCU College at Southern Cross University. She has worked in higher education for over 30 years in enabling, undergraduate and postgraduate education. Her original disciplines are science and mathematics and she has published on mathematics education, teaching and learning in higher education, educational technology and staff development. She is a recipient of an Australian national citation to enhance student learning and is currently a elected member of the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia Executive.

David Bull

David Bull is the Director of the Open Access College at the University of Southern Queensland. He has 25 years of teaching and professional engagement with enabling programs. His research interests lie primarily with issues related to access and equity policy in higher education and preparatory program curriculum development. His teaching and consultancy experience has been largely associated with wide ranging aspects of student diversity in higher education. More recently he has been involved with the 'open agenda', pursuing OER and OEP activities, supporting the work of the OERu and advocating for the wide spread adoption of open practices for the delivery of higher education. He has served as elected Chairperson of the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia Executive since its formation in 2013.

Improving achievement for Māori and Pasifika students in foundation studies



Kiri Waitai, Ngāti Porou and Sharlene Strickland

Aitutaki, Centre for Education and Foundation Pathways, Waikato Institute of Technology

This presentation will describe how the implementation of a Māori/Pasifika Stream has improved retention and achievement in the Certificate in Introduction to Study Level 4 (Health). Outcomes for Māori and Pasifika students were noticeably different and a fresh approach was clearly needed to improve achievement. A Māori/Pasifika stream was created using a values-based framework, combined with tailored delivery in a whānau environment. Using a range of strategies like embedded academic and pastoral support, and institute wide networking, retention, success and experience has improved for Māori and Pasifika students. We will outline what focus areas we identified, the supports systems established and the people involved, and, give an overview of the achievement data.

Kiri Waitai

Kiri Waitai has taught foundation studies for the last six years, teaching writing and communication skills and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. She is passionate about Maori achievement and has been involved in the development of a Maori capability framework and a values-based practice framework for Maori and Pasifika students. She has published two tikanga resources and co-authored a research article about values-based practice. Kiri presented at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education in Hawaii 2015 and, after receiving a scholarship in 2015, attended the International Education Conference in New York, also completing a leadership programme at the Banff Institute in Canada.

Sharlene Strickland

Sharlene Strickland has been teaching at Wintec for 15 years. Eight years in the School of Business and Information Technology and seven years in Centre for Foundation Studies. She teaches technology and communication modules in the Certificate in Introduction to Study level 2 and 4 programmes. She is passionate about Pasifika achievement and in 2012, along with Kiri Waitai, developed a framework for Māori and Pasifika students. Sharlene has recently completed a Research on Developing – a rating scale for perceived self-efficacy to reflect on the academic success of a tikanga Māori cohort.

Introducing the 'Higher Expectation Framework': A dynamic approach for teaching adult learners



Trixie James

Academic Learning Services Unit, CQUniversity

Within the context of an adult learning environment, the approach to teaching differs from practices used within the secondary school settings. This workshop will explore a new teaching framework that was designed after trialling and experiencing a Flipped Model Classroom. The Higher Expectations Framework (HEF) is a structured approach to thinking, planning and actioning, and is an innovative and engaging model that makes the class environment a safe place where students feel empowered to step out of their comfort zone and become more engaged with the content. The classroom focus shifts from an instructor-lecture model to a student-centered dynamic that encourages active learning and deeper knowledge acquisition. Designed around adult learning principles (Knowles, 1978), brain-based learning principles (Caine, 2005) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1995), this andragogical approach enhances meta-learning, encourages higher levels of student engagement, and increases participation where students take ownership of their personal learning. The Review, Connect, Extend, Apply (RCEA) instructional design (James, 2015) guides educators in the process of implementing each step of the Higher Expectation Pyramid. The HEF is an innovative, imaginative, creative, yet simple approach to teaching adults. Within the classroom environment, it ensures that the Seven Principles for Good Practice (*Chickering & Gamson, 1989*) are applied. This framework is fit to purpose, and grounded in research and scholarship. The goal is to enhance the overall culture of academic learning and teaching in the university setting and beyond, with the vision to stimulate the student experience and see all students succeed in their educational journey. The framework can be used through all stages of classroom planning in adult education settings and can be used across a variety of disciplines.

Trixie James

Trixie James is a lecturer within the STEPS program at CQUniversity on the Bundaberg Campus. Trixie's research interests centre on the support and engagement of under-represented adults in the tertiary sector, with special interest in student engagement, quality teaching practices and positive psychology. Her research has culminated in the design and creation of a new teaching framework, Higher Expectation Framework. She completed a Masters of Learning Management in Executive Leadership with a minor thesis that investigated enabling students' successful transition into undergraduate studies. Her research has been shared internationally at the Netherlands and New Zealand, and at various conferences within Australia.

Keeping things in perspective: The Hero's Journey as a roadmap for success



Julie Willans and Karen Seary

CQUniversity

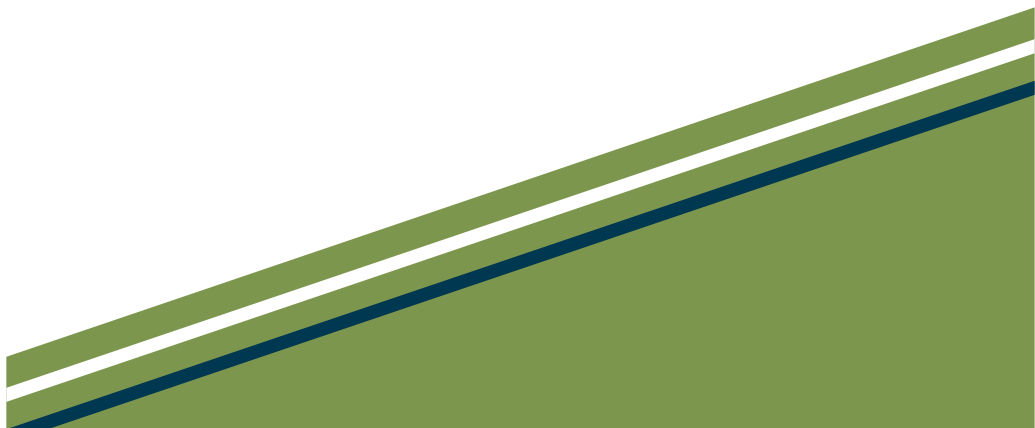
By virtue of our increasingly multi-cultural teaching contexts and rapidly changing world, there are many and rich pedagogical strategies that educators can use to accommodate diverse ways of knowing that have the potential to enhance student equity and accessibility. One simple technique, as old as humanity itself, is the use of narrative, a “basic structure through which we make meaning of our lives” (Clarke & Rossiter, 2006, p. 1). For over 15 years now, the *Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies* (STEPS) program at CQUniversity Australia has utilised Vogler’s (1998; 2007) *Hero’s Journey* metaphor as a framework for students to document their learning journey while in the program. Such a useful tool has been found to serve many functions for students, including the provision of: a means of stress release; an enhanced understanding of individual potential; a confidence builder; a ‘focusing’ and motivational tool; a ‘normalising’ exercise; and fundamentally, an avenue for self-reflection that has been found to fuel resilience and persistence. This paper uses documented evidence across several years to outline the various functions the Hero’s Journey has been found to fulfil for students. We purport that when students are encouraged to self-reflect on their lived experiences, they can gain a “heightened insight into their own learning and development” (Clarke & Rossiter, 2006, p. 3), and when students are foregrounded as protagonists on their own learning journey, they can be empowered to use narratives to capture the various challenges and rewards they encounter throughout their studies. When they have opportunities to understand that changing emotions associated with this ‘roadmap’ are reflective of normal human behaviour, they can experience significant personal transformation not only in how they engage with curricular content, but in how they perceive themselves as learners.

Dr Julie Willans

Dr Julie Willans is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Access Education in the Academic Learning Services Unit at CQUniversity’s Rockhampton campus. She has taught Essay Writing, Report Writing and Preparation Skills for University in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) course at CQUniversity for 15 years. Her research background focuses on transformative learning theory and its application to adult learning in access education. She has a number of academic publications in this area and she has presented at many national and international conferences. More recent research focuses on strategies to enhance Access education.

Karen Seary

Karen Seary is currently the Associate Dean, School of Access Education at Central Queensland University. She has been involved with the university’s enabling program, *Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies* (STEPS) in various roles as lecturer, campus coordinator and Head of Program since 1994. Karen has recently taken on oversight of the University’s Indigenous enabling program, the Tertiary Entry Program (TEP). Karen is an executive member of the National Association of Enabling Educators Australia. Her research interests centre on adult education, in particular, the creation of opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students through enabling programs.



Lighting the path(way): Articulating curriculum design principles in open access enabling programs



Dr Bronwyn Relf

English Language and Foundation Studies, University of Newcastle

Mahsood Shah

Business School, University of Newcastle

Barry Hodges

English Language and Foundation Studies, University of Newcastle

Dr John O'Rourke

School of Education, Edith Cowan University

Sue Sharp

Centre for Learning and Teaching, Edith Cowan University

Dr Nicole Crawford

Pre-degree Programs, University of Tasmania

Robin Barnes

Access, Participation and Partnerships, University of Tasmania

Australia has a large number of university and non-university providers of enabling (bridging) programs. Increasing student enrolments over the last few years have led to increased government scrutiny of these programs (*Lomax-Smith et al, 2011; Kemp & Norton, 2014*) without an accompanying examination of how program curriculum structure contributes to the effectiveness in preparing students, particularly mature aged students, for higher education. Whilst a small number of studies have examined enabling program curriculum design at separate institutions, there are no such national comparative studies (*Lane & Sharp 2014; Relf & Burgess 2014; Sharp, O'Rourke, Lane & Hay, 2014*).

This project, funded by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT), focuses on articulating the curriculum design principles in three open access programs that represent the diversity of programs offered nationally. The approach to curriculum design will be examined in enabling programs offered at the University of Newcastle (UON), Edith Cowan University (ECU) and the University of Tasmania (UTAS). Each of these three institutions have a long history of successful delivery of enabling programs and represent the diversity of enabling programs offered in Australia. Some programs are explicitly designed to prepare students for certain undergraduate disciplines (disciplines focus), others are designed to facilitate transition into a range of disciplines (academic skills focus) while others have a mix of academic skills and discipline focus.

In this workshop, the initial findings of this project will be presented, addressing a critical gap in enabling curriculum design knowledge. Participants will be given the opportunity to contribute their views on enabling curriculum design principles and to assess if these principles are relevant to their current practices. Discussions from this workshop will facilitate the curriculum design in new and existing programs, inform the evaluation of program quality and the development of best practice in enabling program delivery.

Dr Bronwyn Relf

Dr Bronwyn Relf is responsible for coordinating and teaching the 'Science for Nursing and Midwifery' courses in the Open Foundation Program at the University of Newcastle. Her employment at UON has allowed her to combine her love of science with her love of teaching. Bronwyn's research interests include curriculum design and metacognitive learning strategies in enabling and science education, equity in higher education, enabling pedagogy and the scholarship of teaching and learning. She is currently the project leader on an Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching and a Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program National Priorities Pool grant.

Dr John O'Rourke

John O'Rourke is a former secondary classroom teacher and is now a senior lecturer with Edith Cowan University (ECU), Perth, Western Australia. In his current role, he lectures predominately in the area of diversity and inclusivity in the School of Education, and is a former Course Coordinator of the ECU UniPrep Course. His current research interests include: structures and protocols that enhance inclusion, happiness and wellbeing of school aged students, school-based digital games technology, interactive multimedia in university settings and retention and curriculum issues related to enabling programs. He was a co-researcher in the OLT funded, Enabling retention: processes and strategies for improving student retention in university-based enabling programs. He was co-author of the final report and has presented locally, nationally and internationally on this project and other education related research projects.

Sue Sharp

Sue Sharp, is a Senior Lecturer and Course Coordinator of the Edith Cowan University Preparation Course (UniPrep). Sue is a long term Teacher Educator with over 30 years experience in teaching, and curriculum design and delivery. Most recently she led the re-development of the ECU University Preparation Course. With a strong student focus, Sue's passion is to enhance opportunities, particularly for those from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, through relevant and empowering learning experiences and the building of learning communities. Research, review and a strong vision underpins the UniPrep, curriculum design and implementation and has led to the development of a context specific UniPrep Enabling Model. Sue's other research interests include first year experience and the design and delivery of enabling curriculum and pedagogy.

Dr Nicole Crawford

Dr Nicole Crawford is the Campus Coordinator in Launceston for the University of Tasmania's Pre-degree Programs. This position includes unit coordination, lecturing, and tutoring in UTAS's open access enabling program, the University Preparation Program (UPP), as well as fulfilling a pastoral care role. Nicole's research interests include enabling education; social inclusion and equity in higher education; and student and staff wellbeing.

Males in enabling: Their lives, their experience, their perspective. “To those who said I couldn’t do it, thank you for giving me the opportunity to prove you wrong”



Frank Armstrong, Trixie James, Hermina Conradie and Shane Parker

CQ University

Enabling programs play an important role in the up-skilling and development of students who want a second chance at gaining an undergraduate degree at university. Many Australian universities offer these types of programs, commonly known as Enabling, Preparatory, Transition or Access, as a way of developing and up-skilling students by assisting them in transitioning into undergraduate studies. These programs cater to a diverse cohort of both the male and female populace. An ever increasing number of students are utilising these programs as an alternative pathway to university. Within the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) program at CQUniversity, there has been a notable disproportionate number of males to females enrolling in the program; however, this gap is slowly closing with a higher number of males enrolling in both internal and external mode of study. Recent research by the authors (*James, Conradie, & Armstrong, 2014*) began exploring the factors that inhibit or enhance the male experience within this program. This paper expands upon this research with a deeper focus into the male experience through more personalised accounts derived from focus groups. Through thematic analysis, three key themes emerged: Overall Benefits to Students (both extrinsic and intrinsic), Support Structures (internal and external) and Obstacles and Barriers. This research will reveal the commitment and dedication of these male students who shared their personal experiences within the STEPS program, but more than this, it has demonstrated that each one faced obstacles and barriers that could derail their dream; yet, they were successful in conquering the obstacles that would have once located them on the perimeter of higher education. The men in this study represent the empowering transformation that enabling programs instigate. These men, although positioned across different and competing formations of identity, aspire towards an idealized identity even when it is at odds with their lived realities.

Frank Armstrong

Frank Armstrong is the Access Coordinator for the STEPS program at CQUniversity on the Mackay Campus. Frank has a degree in Education and Business and his main areas of teaching are in Preparatory Skills and Technical Writing. His research interest focuses on males and the challenges they face whilst undertaking enabling programs.

Trixie James

Trixie James is a lecturer within the STEPS program at CQUniversity on the Bundaberg Campus. Trixie's research interests centre on the support and engagement of under-represented adults in the tertiary sector, with special interest in student engagement, quality teaching practices and positive psychology. Her research has culminated in the design and creation of a new teaching framework, Higher Expectation Framework. She completed a Masters of Learning Management in Executive Leadership with a minor thesis that investigated enabling students' successful transition into undergraduate studies. Her research has been shared internationally at the Netherlands and New Zealand, and at various conferences within Australia.

Mentoring students who had opted to enrol in on-campus tertiary preparation classes, should support student class attendance: What we found was surprising!



Gary Orth and Clare Robinson

Open Access College, University of South Queensland

There is a high attrition rate within enabling programs designed for students that do not have the academic entrance requirements to enrol in an undergraduate degree. For example only about 30% of students who attend on-campus classes in the first week, are still attending classes in the final two (2) weeks of the semester. Attendance is not compulsory, nor is an attendance register kept. Recent papers by the authors have reviewed the positive influence of increased student engagement in enabling education. One natural progression from this research was to investigate how supporting students through a basic mentoring program might encourage them to keep attending on-campus classes and successfully complete their program.

A pilot project (named operation: connection) was trialled in Semester 1 2016 with the aim of connecting with a small group of students to investigate what processes were effective in supporting them and in particular, would encourage them to attend classes. Eight (8) interested Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) academics were allocated 7-10 students selected randomly from the Toowoomba on-campus class. The group of academics included the lecturers who were involved in teaching the classes (both Mathematics and Studying to Succeed courses), the Director of the Open Access College and a lecturer from another campus. This small project encouraged individual lecturers to use whatever process they were comfortable with to mentor their students throughout the semester and then evaluate what was effective and sustainable that could potentially be used to support students in future semesters.

Gary Orth and Clare Robinson

Gary Orth and Clare Robinson are lecturers in the Open Access College at the University of Southern Queensland. They both teach in the College's Tertiary Preparation Program; Gary in the Management of the Study Skills area and Clare in the three levels of mathematics offered by the program. Both have spent more than 20 years teaching in secondary schools and their focus is student centred. Gary has taught mathematics and study skills at secondary school and is enjoying teaching on campus and also on-line. His research interests are to identify strategies to enhance on-line learning and improve student study management techniques in enabling education.

Models of support for student wellbeing in enabling programs: comparisons, contrasts and commonalities at four Australian universities



Dr Nicole Crawford

University of Tasmania

Dr Joanne Liscandro and Dr Angela Jones

Murdoch University

Deanna McCall, Rosalie Bunn and Helen Cameron

University of Newcastle

Marguerite Westacott and Sharon Andersen

University of The Sunshine Coast

Students in enabling programs bring a richness and diversity to our universities. This diversity is important both to the vitality of our institutions, and the social equity outcomes that enabling programs hope to foster. Yet, in crossing the bridge between pre-university and university entry, these students are often confronted by multiple challenges. Within the literature, challenges such as mental health concerns, complex family issues and being first in the family to attend university, have been shown to impact on students' ability to succeed academically, develop a sense of belonging in the university community and negotiate personal hurdles. For a variety of reasons, many students may seek support and advice from their teachers in regard to their personal challenges. While some universities have adopted an embedded model of support, not all universities provide clear pathways to counselling and psychological support.

The National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) Special Interest Group (SIG) in Mental Health consists of academic and counselling staff who are involved in enabling programs at four institutions across Australia. The SIG members meet regularly online to share their experiences in supporting their students' emotional and psychological wellbeing in their various enabling programs. The members of the NAEEA SIG in Mental Health have identified commonalities and differences among their respective universities. This paper will present the identifying features of four models of supporting enabling students that have been developed at the four institutions. The participating universities include Murdoch University, The University of the Sunshine Coast, The University of Newcastle and the University of Tasmania. Each university's model is unique in terms of whether the support is embedded, external, proactive, reactive, informal or holistic and institution-wide. This paper also aims to identify the common themes evident in the models, such as the stressors, influences and conditions that may arise or exist for students within enabling programs, which may manifest in multiple ways as physical, emotional, psychological and medical presentations, and that may impact on student success.

Sharing, comparing and examining experiences and common themes in enabling programs provides the foundation for recommendations for future research directions within university enabling programs with the view to eventually developing a set of evidence-based 'best practice' guiding principles for enabling program educators and staff.

Dr Nicole Crawford

Dr Nicole Crawford is the Campus Coordinator in Launceston for the University of Tasmania's Pre-degree Programs. This position includes unit coordination, lecturing, and tutoring in UTAS's open access enabling program, the University Preparation Program (UPP), as well as fulfilling a pastoral care role. Nicole's research interests include enabling education; social inclusion and equity in higher education; and student and staff wellbeing.

Dr Joanne G Lisciandro

Dr Joanne Lisciandro is currently employed as a Lecturer in the Centre for University Teaching and Learning, and is one of the coordinators of the OnTrack pre-university enabling program at Murdoch University in Western Australia. She has been involved with the program since completing her PhD studies in the health sciences in 2012. Her current research interests focus on science education as part of the curriculum for enabling programs and in understanding the factors that contribute to student retention, success and achievement in enabling program pathways.

Dr Angela Jones

Dr Angela Jones is a lecturer at Murdoch University, Western Australia and Unit Coordinator of the OnTrack and OnTrack Sprint pre-university enabling programs at Murdoch University in Western Australia. She finished her PhD in Cultural Studies in 2007, and has subsequently published book chapters and journal articles that focus on digital culture, higher education and popular culture. Her current research projects focus on popular culture and acculturation; education and learning communities; social and emotional learning, and social media and identity.

Rosalie Bunn

Rosalie Bunn has been an enabling educator for 21 years and holds an academic position as Coordinator of Social Enquiry, an introductory sociology subject, and as Academic Advisor at the Ourimbah campus of the University of Newcastle. She has written extensively on topics relating to enabling education and is currently completing her PhD on the history and impacts of the University of Newcastle's Open Foundation Program.

Marguerite Westacott

Marguerite Westacott has been teaching in the Tertiary Preparation Pathways (TPP) at the University of the Sunshine Coast since 2010, tutoring, lecturing and coordinating across four of the courses offered in this program. Prior to USC, Marguerite worked in a variety of educational and community settings in teaching, leadership and counselling roles. She is passionate about facilitating the development of students' identity as a lifelong learner, through innovative pedagogical practice and curriculum design, which considers the whole person.

Not just the library's responsibility: A cross-discipline, multimodal approach to teaching information literacy in an enabling program



Helen Holden and Jenny McDougall

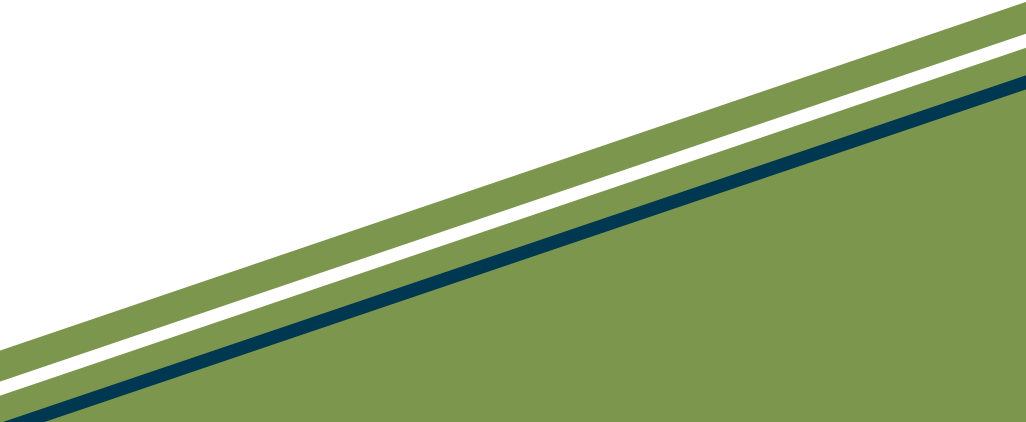
CQUniversity

Information literacy skills are considered essential for self-management and lifelong learning. As enabling educators, we therefore have a responsibility to ensure that our students are well equipped with these skills. While librarians have traditionally been seen as the custodians of this knowledge, information literacy skills are increasingly viewed as a shared responsibility in higher education. In this paper, we report on a number of innovations made in STEPS, an enabling program from CQUniversity, Australia. A review of the writing courses in this program led us to conclude that a fresh approach to information literacy was needed. As lecturers within the program, we felt we were in the best position to tailor the curricula and resources to the needs of our students and staff, so long as we continued liaising with library staff.

Two major concerns informed the changes made at this time. One was the need for more consistency around information literacy, since students were introduced to a different set of resources and terminology in each of their STEPS writing courses. The second critical issue was to enhance our multi-modal delivery in order to achieve more equity for our growing cohort of distance students. In response to these challenges, we refined our curriculum within the course, Preparation Skills for University (PSU), the one core course within the program, and where students are first introduced to information literacy. Two new modules, covering note-taking, paraphrasing and research skills, were introduced. We also revised an information literacy guide, a resource that had been used in academic writing subjects but also became embedded in PSU. A consistency in language and approach was used throughout these online materials, including the ROAC (Relevance Objectivity Authority Currency) framework that we developed for critical evaluation of scholarly texts. To help make key concepts more accessible to students, we used a conversational tone and a step-by-step approach in the narrative created, as well as adopting a visual approach, making use of photos and graphics throughout. To further enhance the experience for distance students, we collaborated with the Library to create a series of YouTube clips that introduce students to key research strategies. In combination, these innovations have streamlined the approach taken to information literacy in the STEPS program, created a stronger online presence, and provided engaging resources that are now used by staff and students in the wider University community.

Helen Holden

Helen Holden is an academic in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) program in the School of Access Education at CQUniversity, Australia. Embracing a personal philosophy of teaching that places the learning experiences of students at its forefront, her work is about supporting mature age students to re-enter formal education. In particular, she has been acknowledged for using creative strategies that enable a diverse and marginalised group of learners to develop the academic and personal skills necessary to become lifelong learners. For her efforts, in 2010 Helen was recognised by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council by way of a Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.



OnTrack to Learner Success: Strategies for embedding socio-emotional learning as part of a holistic enabling transition pedagogy



Dr Angela Jones, Dr Joanne Lisciandro and Anita Olds

Centre for University Teaching and Learning, Murdoch University

The connection and impact of emotions on education and learning (from kindergarten to adult) has been of interest to researchers for decades. In 2001, Dirkx unpacked the 'growing body' of literature that demonstrates the connection of emotion, emotional intelligence, feelings and imagination on adult learning, noting 'emotion and feelings are deeply interrelated with perceiving and processing information from our external environments, storing and retrieving information in memory, reasoning, and the embodiment of learning' (Dirkx, 2001, p. 68). The research and application of ideas, especially within the primary and secondary sectors continues to grow. Of particular note is Carol Dweck's work on mindsets, as well as focus on psycho-education as an evolving area of interest; the link between enhancing one's self-awareness, perception and interpretation of a problem or a difficult/stressful situation to improved self-efficacy, resilience and wellbeing. The Australian education system has recognised the importance of the development of personal and social capabilities, noting that it is the "foundation of learning and citizenship" (ACARA, 2015). The Australian curriculum responds to this need by embedding socio-emotional learning outcomes across all subject areas. It has been highlighted that enabling students, particularly those from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, often come to this new learning environment with gaps in their previous education, including their social-emotional learning, and sometimes also with negative emotions resulting from previous learning experiences. In our previous research we have shared the process of embedding Carol Dweck's work on mindsets and emotional intelligence activities within the OnTrack enabling curriculum. We recognise that there is a need for an enabling transition pedagogy (ETP) that focuses on understanding the learner and preparing them for their educational journey ahead; both academically and emotionally. Drawing on our enabling transition pedagogy model, this paper demonstrates how and where embedded strategies addressing the socio-emotional needs of the learner can be included in a holistic ETP. The case study of Murdoch University's OnTrack program demonstrates how curriculum design and staff development choices that support socio-emotional learning have been informed by the ETP model: engaging students in learning, intentionally fostering a sense of belonging, and providing proactive and timely access to learning support. By highlighting the importance of embedding strategies for socio-emotional learning within this model, our aim is to illustrate how curriculum development informed by psycho-education can positively impact the enabling cohort in their transition to university.

Dr Angela Jones

Dr Angela Jones is a lecturer at Murdoch University, Western Australia and Unit Coordinator of the OnTrack and OnTrack Sprint pre-university enabling programs at Murdoch University in Western Australia. She finished her PhD in Cultural Studies in 2007, and has subsequently published book chapters and journal articles that focus on digital culture, higher education and popular culture. Her current research projects focus on popular culture and acculturation; education and learning communities; social and emotional learning; and social media and identity.

Dr Joanne G. Lisciandro

Dr Joanne Lisciandro is currently employed as a Lecturer in the Centre for University Teaching and Learning, and is one of the coordinators of the OnTrack pre-university enabling program at Murdoch University in Western Australia. She has been involved with the program since completing her PhD studies in the health sciences in 2012. Her current research interests focus on science education as part of the curriculum for enabling programs and in understanding the factors that contribute to student retention, success and achievement in enabling program pathways.

Anita Olds

Anita Olds has been an Associate Lecturer in OnTrack, a pre university enabling program, at Murdoch University since 2013. Previously an International Baccalaureate teacher in Singapore, a Curriculum Coordinator in an Australian high school, and a Teaching and Learning Coach, Anita brings to the enabling space 15 years of diverse teaching experience. She has a special interest in educational psychology and curriculums that holistically respond to the needs of the learner. Anita is currently pursuing a Masters in Counselling. Her research areas are in effective curriculum design and social and emotional learning.

Pathways to success: Access with support is opportunity



Liz Smith

Distance Education, Charles Sturt University

Despite significant policy and funding reform with a clear widening participation agenda (*Bradley 2009*), regional students, many who are from low socio economic status (LSES) backgrounds, continue to be under represented in higher education compared to their metropolitan peers (approximately one third lower than the state average and nearly 40% lower than for metropolitan areas). Part of the challenge for regional and remote school leavers is the continued use of the Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) as the primary means of gaining entry to university, despite research to indicate this rank aligns more closely with postcode than academic potential (*Teese 2016*).

Educational disadvantage is the result of a complex interplay of social, cultural and geographical issues that can result in students lacking the awareness, aspiration, support and preparation to successfully participate in university study. The cumulative effect of this disadvantage can result in students either not gaining an ATAR or achieving a rank deemed too low for university entry. Despite being acknowledged as an imperfect predictor of academic success, the continued privileging of the ATAR as the main determinant of entry to university for school leavers effectively denies access to a significant group of students well positioned not only to succeed at university but to go on to contribute to a more highly skilled and trained Australian workforce.

This paper reports on an innovative pathway program developed by Charles Sturt University (CSU) that has effectively increased access to university for under-represented groups and has prepared these students to succeed in their subsequent degrees. The CSU Pathway Program is a unique, one-year Diploma course offered in partnership with TAFE in two states across four sites. As *Tinto (2008)* states “access with support is not opportunity”. The CSU Pathway recognises this and in addition to providing potential university access, strives to provide a uniquely supported and scaffolded program that will seamlessly and successfully transition students to university study.

Since the inception of the CSU Pathway Program in 2010, more than 540 students have enrolled in the program with 264 students commencing university degrees as a result of their successful completion. The program has outstanding retention rates, with equally favourable performance of students once they begin their undergraduate degrees. As the program matures, students are beginning to graduate from their degrees (17 in total to date) with the first PhD student commencing her studies this year.

The design of the program will be described in this paper together with the program's alignment with Transition Pedagogy (*Kift, 2009*), proposals to include exit points in program of study (*Harvey & Szalkowicz 2016*) and the findings of the recent Government funded report into the efficacy of Enabling and Sub Bachelor Pathways for Disadvantaged Students (*Pitman, Trinidad, Devlin, Harvey, Brett & McKay, 2016*). Program statistics and student tracking data will also be presented along with student vignettes as a means of understanding the student experience of the program.

Liz Smith

Liz is currently the Director, Academic Success at Charles Sturt University (CSU) Australia and a member of the University Council. Her portfolio has responsibility for supporting the transition, academic success and retention of students together with raising aspirations of school students to consider university as a realistic option. Liz has a long history in enabling education and a strong commitment to social inclusion and supporting diverse student cohorts, particularly in the first year of university. She was responsible for the development of the CSU enabling program which has had an enrolment of more than 35,000 students. More recently Liz developed the CSU Pathway Program and she is also responsible for the Indigenous Access Program. Liz has been nationally recognised for her work including CUTSD Grants, an ASCILITE Award, two Australian Learning and Teaching Council Citations, a National OLT Program Award and a CSU Vice Chancellor's Award. Liz was a member of the national project team responsible for the development of Guidelines for the Effective Support of Students from LSES Backgrounds, and was also a member of the recent OLT project: Shaping the 21st Century Student Experience at Regional Universities.

Picturing pathways to education: The benefits of pre-enabling programs in widening participation



Michelle Mansfield

English Language and Foundation Studies Centre, University of Newcastle

Picturing Pathways to Education, a research study undertaken in 2015-6 examined the experiences of students in the Uni4You project. Uni4You is a pre-enabling project offering a suite of free activities and workshops to non-traditional students that foster engagement and encourage enrolment in the pathway programs at the University of Newcastle, Australia. These activities include career advice, preparing for study sessions, information technology assistance and coping with change discussions. The Uni4You is an outreach project where the team work in a number of areas in and around the city of Newcastle.

The Picturing Pathways to Education study explored pre-enabling programs and their effectiveness for preparing students for university enabling programs, thus filling a gap in the literature relating to pre-enabling programs and the factors that support or hinder successful completion of enabling programs. This investigation sought to explore students' experiences of studying in the Uni4You project. This scheme encourages student engagement with transformative higher educational opportunities for historically underrepresented groups including women, people from low socio-economic communities, indigenous students, students with mental health issues and those of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Our research investigation employed a creative heuristic, qualitative research design that utilised a range of exploratory data collection methods including photo elicitation, creative writing and recorded conversational interviews. Participants were actively engaged in the research process via a strengths based participatory preparatory workshop, which aimed to build skills in photography and creative writing as well as trigger participant thinking about what had enabled and challenged them in relation to their experience of entering tertiary education. The creative outputs from this process were later used in interviews. Consequently, this investigation contributes an initial understanding of the potential for creative engagement as a research strategy with equity target groups.

The research study sought to address a number of objectives including the facilitators and challenges in the transition to student process. This paper explores the key research findings from this study and their implications for pedagogical practice and university structures within widening participation landscape.

Michelle Mansfield

Michelle Mansfield is the Convenor of the University of Newcastle's Open Foundation Program, an adult enabling program that enables people to qualify for entry into Australian universities. Michelle is a PhD candidate in Sociology. Her current research interests include equity and participation in higher education, youth sociology and cultural sociology.

Playful learning: Incorporating games into the bridging classroom



Sandie Elsom

University of the Sunshine Coast

There is a growing recognition of, and interest in, the benefits of games to support learning and engagement. This is highlighted by the intense interest in “Pokémon Go”, a game designed to get players off the couch, meeting new people and exploring their neighbourhoods. However, game development requires a specialised skill set that can take years to develop. More than that, sophisticated games require a team of dedicated people who collaborate over a long period of time. While it seems obvious that educators should be taking advantage of games for learning, in practice it is not simple to achieve.

This interactive workshop demonstrates a number of simpler ways that educators can incorporate games into the bridging classroom. It proposes that there are several ways in which we can use games without requiring years of training and coding experience. We may be able to use existing games, both digital and non-digital. These games can be used ‘as is’ or adapted to purpose. Many teachers already use engaging classroom activities, and these activities may require only a small amount of extra development or some tweaks to turn them into games. Finally, I suggest that we can use facilitated games, a shorter, simpler method of educational game design. These are games where the teacher takes the role of the instruction booklet and adapts the game as necessary as it is played. Each of these methods will be demonstrated (or in fact played) and strategies and resources provided so that you can use playful learning in your own classrooms.

The workshop content is informed by the principles of game design and the literature related to student engagement and adult learning. Additionally, the workshop will highlight some of the exciting innovations from USC’s Bachelor of Serious Game Development, the first program in Australia of its type.

Sandra Elsom

Sandie Elsom is an early-career academic and Associate Lecturer in USC’s Preparatory and Enabling unit, with degrees in Business and Education. Sandie has a creative flair, which combined with a passion for learning design and a genuine sense of fun, has led to her interest in educational games and subsequent enrolment in the Bachelor of Serious Games at USC. Her current focus is on the use of alternate reality games to engage students in higher education.

Reframing the selfie: The importance of developing confidence in foundation students



Michael X. Savvas and Salah Kutieleh

Flinders University

An important aim of Flinders University's Foundation Studies Program (FSP) is to develop students' confidence that they can undertake university study. As part of this process, all FSP students are required to write as their first assignment a reflective piece about their past negative and positive educational experiences. As numerous FSP students have expressed in their reflective pieces, their negative educational experiences at primary and secondary schooling have affected their self-image. In response to such viewpoints, a number of initiatives have been introduced in the FSP that seek to challenge this negativity by giving the students a sense of student identity that is divorced from the deficit model of viewing themselves. Some of these initiatives include focusing on positive feedback to enhance their capacity not only to persist with the course, but also to do well in it; making lectures as interactive as possible without overwhelming students; incorporating on FSP topic handbook covers images and biographies of former FSP students who have become successful undergraduate and postgraduate students; and providing a formal graduation ceremony in which students receive their Certificates of Completion from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. This ceremony helps the University, in addition to engaging with individual students, to promote the course and establish ties with the students' families and communities. This approach is augmented by a major workshop on the nature of the course and the family's role in providing informed advice, if and when needed, to family members involved in the FSP. This strategy has translated into more expressions of interest from multiple family members—an issue that has been taken up by the media in recent times. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of FSP students who enrol at Flinders as undergraduates after completing the FSP has also increased markedly. These initiatives, among others, have been acknowledged by FSP students who have consistently expressed how the program has enhanced their confidence to undertake their chosen degrees. Internal research from Flinders tends to corroborate the students' perception, as it has shown that FSP students who perform well in the program are more likely to meet and complete the requirements of their first year of study. Moreover, there seems to be an association between doing well in the course and the students' academic performance as measured by their Grade Point Average (GPA) in their first year of study.

Dr Michael X. Savvas

Dr Michael Savvas is a Senior Lecturer in the Transition Office at Flinders University, South Australia. He co-ordinates and lectures in the Flinders Foundation Studies Program. He is particularly interested in exploring ways to make learning more engaging for students who have been let down previously by the educational system.

Associate Professor Salah Kutieleh

Associate Professor Salah Kutieleh is the Director of Transition at Flinders University, South Australia. He has a wealth of experience in enabling education and is passionate about student retention.

Restructuring the Habitus: the case of Open Foundation students with a (dis)ability



Rosalie J. Bunn

English Language and Foundation Studies Centre, University of Newcastle

Universities now strive to make reasonable accommodations for the circumstances of students with disabilities through enhanced disability support, but this was not always the case. This paper analyses the stories of thirty eight (38) such students who completed the Open Foundation Program (OFP) at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, between 1985 and 2011. These students had a range of conditions including mental health issues, Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, hearing and sight impairments. They spoke of their reasons for enrolling, their experience of undertaking the program, about further study and, in many cases, successful career outcomes. The majority of these former students indicated their lives had undergone mostly positive change as a consequence of undertaking OFP. The research survey sample was collected from the University of Newcastle's Potential Enabling Program Participant Research (PEPPR) volunteer register and includes the responses of 28 women and 10 men aged in their 20s to 50s which, for the majority, focus on their abilities rather than their (dis)abilities. The analysis of their stories utilises the notion of habitus as described by Bourdieu. He wrote that habitus was a predisposition toward certain ways of behaving that are expected of "people like us" (1990:77). He claimed habitus excluded certain practices which are unfamiliar to the cultural groupings to which people belong but that it otherwise has no specific rules and is not predictable (1990:355). In taking a strengths-based approach, the paper argues that these students' habitus, as Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992: 133) suggested, is not static or immutable, it can evolve in response to changing experiences and circumstances and often lead to more fulfilling and satisfying lives due to educational enrichment. Likewise, their stories reflect that the habitus of universities is also changing as the enactment of equity agendas challenges and expands notions of the able student.

Rosalie Bunn

Rosalie Bunn has been an enabling educator for 21 years and holds an academic position as Coordinator of Social Enquiry, an introductory sociology subject, and as Academic Advisor at the Ourimbah campus of the University of Newcastle. She has written extensively on topics relating to enabling education and is currently completing her PhD on the history and impacts of the University of Newcastle's Open Foundation Program.

‘Show up’: Is that the recipe for success?



Karen Seary and Trixie James

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

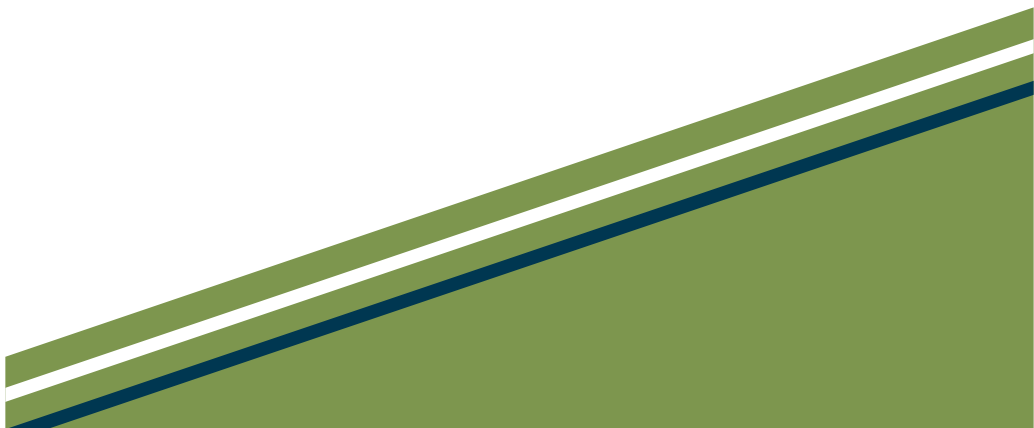
Students are most likely to achieve in an enabling program when they are fully present and strongly engaged. Student non-attendance at class is a major concern for enabling educators at institutions of higher learning. Failure by students to regularly attend face-to-face, on campus classes has potential to hinder the establishment and maintenance of a dynamic and engaged learning environment as well as negatively affect individual student performance. Preliminary findings from an online survey for a research project investigating the value of CQUniversity’s enabling students studying the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies Program (STEPS) attending face-to-face classes have been further supported by feedback gathered from focus groups and personal interviews with students who participated in the survey. The student voice points to a diverse range of factors that influence the decision made by internal STEPS students to attend or not attend face-to-face classes. Employing the student voice, this paper will identify the factors hindering full attendance by STEPS students. It will offer strategies to address each factor in quest of establishing a learning environment that more effectively encourages and facilitates optimal attendance at scheduled on campus, face-to-face classes.

Karen Seary

Karen Seary is currently the Associate Dean, School of Access Education at Central Queensland University. She has been involved with the university’s enabling program, Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) in various roles as lecturer, campus coordinator and Head of Program since 1994. Karen has recently taken on oversight of the University’s Indigenous enabling program, the Tertiary Entry Program (TEP). Karen is an executive member of the National Association of Enabling Educators Australia. Her research interests centre on adult education, in particular, the creation of opportunity for educationally disadvantaged students through enabling programs.

Trixie James

Trixie James is a lecturer within the STEPS program at CQUniversity on the Bundaberg Campus. Trixie’s research interests centre on the support and engagement of under-represented adults in the tertiary sector, with special interest in student engagement, quality teaching practices and positive psychology. Her research has culminated in the design and creation of a new teaching framework, Higher Expectation Framework. She completed a Masters of Learning Management in Executive Leadership with a minor thesis that investigated enabling students’ successful transition into undergraduate studies. Her research has been shared internationally at the Netherlands and New Zealand, and at various conferences within Australia.



Student success, health and well-being in enabling education



Associate Professor Sharron King

UniSA College

**Dr Gisela Van Kessel, Dr Stephanie Reuter Lange,
Dr Emma Parkinson-Lawrence and Myfanwy Tilley**

Division of Health Sciences, University of South Australia

Dr Amber Mosevich

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta

Students' sense of thriving and wellbeing at university is influenced by positive academic engagement, developing a sense of belonging, and effective time management. Research in the enabling education sector has identified these influences as some of the key behavioural factors that impact on enabling students' academic engagement, retention and transition experience into undergraduate studies.

This presentation describes the findings of a teaching innovation conducted at UniSA in 2015 that focused on developing students' academic skills and well-being. The objective of that study was to measure students' well-being and self-regulated learning (SRL) behaviours, and through intervention strategies designed on constructs relating to SRL and the promotion of self-compassion, promote better learning, well-being and resilience in students. SRL has been strongly correlated with academic achievement, developing students' metacognitive capacity and their ability to accurately monitor and regulate learning behaviours. High self-compassion among students has been associated with, among other things, better transition to university, improved academic and social engagement, less motivation anxiety, reduced procrastination. Higher self-compassion aids positive personal development, where individuals are enabled to respond more constructively to life's problems, rather than becoming isolated as a result of them.

Results from the study showed that 60.5% of students (N=422) indicated they were 'coping okay' with their transition to university, and 10% indicated they were 'thriving'. Worryingly, 29% indicated they were 'only just surviving'. None of the students who had gained admission to university via an enabling pathway (n=27) perceived themselves to be thriving at university. Factors such as gender, FIF status, ESL, current living arrangements, previous educational background did not have a significant impact on students' perceived thriving status. Interestingly students who perceived themselves to be thriving also showed greater resilience across the academic year and better SRL scores. There was also a significant positive correlation between self-compassion and resilience. Importantly, the resulting data showed a statistically significant positive correlation between self-compassion and resilience, and significant differences for post-intervention resilience scores. Overall, students' reflections on the self-compassion and SRL interventions were positive, indicating a subsequent increased awareness of their learning style, self-perception, attitudes to study, leading to more constructive approaches and attitudes towards learning and resilience.

While demographic barriers to participation in education can be targeted through equity policies, provision of services and infrastructure, behavioural variables are a wild card: they are difficult to predict, definitively identify or categorise. Attrition rates from enabling programs are around 50% and though education may not be for everybody, increasing retention is a key government focus. The way forward in improving retention and academic engagement in enabling education may be to more proactively focus on developing student's resilience and sense of thriving, in addition to establishing proficient learning behaviours. Attention to this understanding of student engagement is growing across the higher education sector, and there is certainly a strong argument for exploring it within the Australian enabling education sector through intercollegiate longitudinal research and development of intervention or curriculum resources.

Associate Professor Sharron King

Associate Professor Sharron King is the Academic Director and Deputy Head of UniSA College. The College provides a Foundation Studies Program and a range of Diplomas as enabling pathways to university degrees. Sharron's background is in Health Sciences and she has a PhD in Higher Education. Her research interests focus primarily on students' transition, health and well-being at university and widening access to university for students who face educational disadvantage. Recent projects include an OLT funded project on staff and student's expectations and experiences of university study and a NCSEHE project exploring the factors that enable success for 'first in family' students.

Myfanwy Tilley

Myfanwy Tilley is the Research Coordinator at the UniSA College. Her current research involvement at the College includes researching experiences of enabling program students transitioning into undergraduate programs, the experiences of rural and remote Indigenous students in the College Foundation Studies program, and unlocking education pathways for women. Myfanwy has experience in research across education, health, economics and legal spheres.

Studying the digital competencies of access education students at a regional Australian university



Michael A. Cowling

School of Engineering and Technology

Michelle Gray and Phillipa Sturgess

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Current trends in higher education research generally focus on the use of computer technologies in teaching, in particular investigating how new devices might be integrated into the classroom. However, whilst much of the research in this area focuses on the latest trends, such as tablets, smart phones and wearable technology, effective teaching practice must focus also on understanding the affordances that students bring to the learning situation.

The overall aim of this research therefore involves assessing students' prior to and after completion of a computing course, as part of an access education program, to map their digital competency, allowing us to assess these affordances. The key questions being asked are "What are the base digital competencies of commencing access-education students?" and "How do these pre-existing digital competencies impact the acquisition of further computing skills?". This paper focuses specifically on students enrolled in the STEPS program, offered by CQUniversity in Australia, which is designed to teach students skills such as writing, math, basic computing and introductory science, as well as the study skills necessary to successfully navigate university.

Initial data collection was conducted for volunteer STEPS students across two campuses, immediately prior to commencing the computing course and after completion of the course. Independent interviewers conducted both sessions, which were recorded for later transcription and consisted of three sections: A series of open ended questions focusing on previous experience with computers; structured questions about digital devices regularly used, the most common activities performed and a self-assessment of their skill level for the nominated activity; and a practical task involving applying specific formatting in Word.

The data revealed that all students showed an average improvement in skill level of 28% after the completion of the course. It also showed that age had no bearing on the ability of participants, however exposure to and use of computers in the workplace had the greatest impact on the level of improvement in skills after completion. Mostly, if the participants had previous exposure to MS Word, they showed the highest level of improvement in skills. The influence of the use of a home PC had mixed results, however the use of smartphones had no demonstrated impact on the level of improvement.

Overall, these results, despite a small sample size, demonstrate the need for greater granularity when describing the technical skill of students. Whilst on the surface students appear to be technically savvy, this research indicated that there is far more to digital competency than a single measure along a linear scale, rather digital competency should be measured using a combination of confidence, applications used and also device specific experience. Future work should look at exploring markers for each of these dimensions in greater detail with a view to a more robust multifaceted understanding of digital competency.

Michelle Gray

Michelle Gray has a long background in supporting and teaching users of technology in industry and has taught computer skills in CQUniversity's undergraduate Business and Education courses as well as the STEPS enabling course over the last ten years, primarily in distance education mode. This role has included the development of a range of integrated learning materials and learning activities, as well as the implementation of flexible delivery options tailored to meet the needs of novice computer users.

Successfully enabling students from foundation chemistry studies to higher levels of tertiary studies



Dr. Zoë Griffiths

English Language and Foundation Studies, University of Newcastle

The University of Newcastle has been offering free pathway enabling programs for over 20 years and maintains the largest enabling program nationally. It is for this reason that measures need to be taken to ensure that these students are academically prepared for success in their chosen undergraduate degree and have been taught the skills and gain the confidence to undertake the Science degrees. One such minority group is refugees, who are starting to increase in numbers within the enabling program. It is also hoped to examine teaching techniques and learning support to ensure that all students are given the grounding to successfully prepare them for higher tertiary studies.

Studies have shown over the recent years that the University of Newcastle's Chemistry Open Foundation students are not being successfully enabled for their undergraduate science degree. Under half of the students admitted into undergraduate science degrees successfully completed first year of the core subject of chemistry. Figures also show that only 13% of students from early cohort's successfully managed to obtain a degree.

Chemistry is a core subject in first year undergraduate for all the health science degrees, Bio Medical Science and the Sciences at Newcastle University. It is therefore imperative that students are well prepared coming into their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degrees. Many improvements have been made over the last two years in which the results are extremely pleasing with all enabling students entering into first year chemistry passing the course.

This paper looks at two curriculum initiatives that were implemented to bridge the discourse that was occurring between enabling and undergraduate courses. The results show a significant increase in the preparedness of the students entering into tertiary studies. It is these results and the methods used that will be discussed at length within to ensure quality teaching and equity within science and other foundation courses.

Dr Zoë Griffiths

Dr Zoë Griffiths undertook a Bachelor of Science (Chem) at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Victoria in 2000. She then completed her honors year graduating with 1st class honors. She then completed her PhD at La Trobe University in 2006. In 2007, Zoë undertook her post doctorate at T-U Berlin. For several years after that she worked in industry until returning to Australia to take up a casual position at the University of Newcastle, both in English Language and Foundation Studies and the Department of Chemistry and Environmental Sciences. Zoë is passionate about access and equity for all and also works internationally with colleagues from the University of Stockholm with the International Science program (ISP) in South East Asia, mainly Cambodia and Laos, to enhance academic integration of those from less advantaged countries.

Supporting resilience in the first year: Curriculum, consideration and cooperation



Dr Sulay Jalloh, Scott Knight, Birut Zemits, Amanda Janssen and Susi Woolf

Charles Darwin University

The diversity of people accessing university and the variety of modes to deliver learning demands that universities develop innovative ways to support students in their first year. Enhancing the capacities of undergraduates to be resilient and succeed in completing and continuing the first year are a priority, particularly for regional institutions that rely on external and international student enrolments. This research study seeks to identify effective supports for students through what is often a turbulent first year. It looks at how students and staff perceive effectiveness of strategies for developing resilient learning drawing together curriculum design, teaching methods and institutional supports such as counselling. Surveys and a focus group with students from multiple disciplines in their second year, who had completed a compulsory common unit titled 'Cultural Intelligence and Capability' in their first year, informed this study alongside reflective responses based on lecturer experiences with students in their first year.

The researchers identified how embedded strategies for resilience in curriculum were appreciated by students from a range of study areas. The writers conclude that adversity experienced by many students in first year can be prepared for and adjusted to through such conscious inclusion of content focussing on 'how to bounce back from difficulties' in curricular materials underpinned by effective support structures within a university.

Dr. Sulay Jalloh

Dr. Sulay Jalloh is a multidisciplinary researcher lecturing in the Tertiary Enabling Program and in the Common Units at Charles Darwin University (CDU). Before joining CDU, he was a lecturer in the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages at the University of South Australia (UniSA). Sulay has a strong research focus and interest in enabling pathways, adult learning pedagogy, academic and cultural literacy and media representation of minority groups. He is currently developing a community driven intervention program to enable African families and youth, particularly from low SES backgrounds, the opportunity to explore options for nurturing higher education aspirations.

The challenge: An adventure through embedded literacy and numeracy



Naomi Bates and Justin Wigmore

Toi-Ohomai Institute of Technology

Embedded literacy and numeracy has proven to be the hot topic of discussion across the education sector. With this in mind, we took on the challenge to re-engage our Level 2 Youth Guarantee students, to present content in an integrated, student-facilitated manner.

Students enrolled in our programme have come from a traditional secondary education model that has not met their learning needs for a variety of reasons. Many chose, or are diverted to, this programme as a 'last ditch' effort at achieving the first stepping-stone to higher study, or accessing a trades/vocational pathway. A significant number of these students come with poor self-esteem, low confidence and an array of stories depicting a very negative perception of education based on prior school experiences. We set about designing a programme that was purposeful and real, that would advocate healthy living leading to positive changes. Our challenge was to provide a course that delivered something different, that did not feel like school, that dared students to increase their ability to be self-directed learners, to work cooperatively in groups, and to present themselves as leaders.

This presentation will deliver the encounters we faced as educators of embedded learning: the factors that engaged learners; the way we challenged our students to move from the tick box and prescriptive style of learning they were used to, to an eventual self-directed, purposeful style of learning that promoted growth as individuals and leaders; increased communication skills and an embedded understanding of literacy and numeracy.

Naomi Bates

Tihe mauri ora. Ko Takitimu te waka, Ko Maungataniwha Ranges te maunga, Ko Mangamuka te awa, Ko Rongomaiwahine me Te-Aitanga-a-Mahaki te iwi, No Tauranga Moana, Ko Naomi ahau. Naomi graduated from the University of Waikato with a Bachelor of Social Science, with majors in Maori Development and Education, a Post Grad Diploma in Leisure Studies and a Post Grad Diploma in Teaching. She arrived at Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology in September 2015, with 13 years teaching experience in various decile high schools around Northland, Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. Naomi is currently the Foundations Studies Level 2 tutor and Programme Coordinator.

The Yapug Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enabling program



Dr Sharlene Leroy-Dyer

English Language and Foundation Studies Centre, University of Newcastle

The Yapug Program was introduced to the University of Newcastle in 1999 as a replacement to the Aboriginal Bridging Program. It is an enabling program designed to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gain skills for entry into undergraduate degrees at UON. The program is run jointly by the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre and the Wollotuka Institute and is physically located within the Wollotuka Institute.

The Program was initially run as a health studies preparatory program, and has been expanded over time into four pathways:

- Health Sciences
- Education, Arts, Social Sciences and Design
- Business, Law, Commerce and Information Technology
- Engineering and Science

The learning and teaching methods used in the Yapug Program are outlined in the Cultural Standards of the Wollotuka Institute, which inform the Institute's relationships with students, the community and the University. The Cultural Standards provide a set of principles and standards against which the cultural integrity of the Wollotuka Institute is monitored, reviewed and assessed. The Wollotuka Institute Cultural Standards are structured to recognise and respectfully acknowledge the cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Utilising the Wollotuka Institute's Cultural Standards, the Yapug program reflects Indigenous pedagogical approaches, embedding of Indigenous knowledges as well as the tailoring of courses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts. For example, the traditional lecture/tutorial format used in other enabling programs such as Newstep or Open Foundation is often replaced with 'Yarning or Talking Circles' and interactive workshops which provide a more culturally appropriate learning experience for students.

In 2015, the Yapug Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enabling program underwent a review in line with the University of Newcastle's External Program Review policy guidelines. This paper focuses on the commendations and recommendations that came out of that review, including the implementation process, the consultation process, the changes to the program structure and courses and the support mechanism put in place that have begun to reframe, strengthen and grow the program into the future.

Dr Sharlene Leroy-Dyer

Dr Sharlene Leroy-Dyer is an Aboriginal woman, a descendant of the Guringai, Gadigal, Wirajuri and Dhurag peoples, of NSW. Sharlene is the first Aboriginal person to graduate from the University of Newcastle with a PhD in Management. She also holds a Bachelor of Business (Hons) from the University of Newcastle. Sharlene's research focuses on Closing the Gap on the disadvantage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face in Employment and Education and is currently employed as the Program Convenor, Yapug and Indigenous Enabling Academic Advisor at the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre at the University of Newcastle.

Towards a national quality framework for enabling programs in Australia



George Lambrinidis and Dr Sulay Jalloh

School of Academic Language and Learning, Charles Darwin University

There are 35 enabling programs (as defined by *Irwin & Baker, 2104, pp. 14-15*) offered by 27 out of the 40 Australian universities. These programs are classified as non-award courses and fall outside the bounds of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Universities have developed enabling programs distinct for their own requirements, with each enabling program differing in program length, content and mode of delivery. A recent report by Curtin University outlines some of the issues that this kind of diversity may promote, such as a lack of transparency and information about each enabling program available to potential students, and suggests that enabling programs should better align with the institutions undergraduate level (*Pitman et al, 2016*).

The lack of clear national reference points compounds the problems associated with a lack of consistency or transparency as to how academic standards are determined, applied, monitored, and maintained in enabling programs. Whilst benchmarking across national and international enabling programs is increasingly being implemented as part of course quality measures, on the whole the approaches do not appear to be particularly systematic or unified (*Stella & Woodhouse, 2007*). It is the aim of this study to initiate a discussion towards developing a flexible quality framework for enabling programs in Australia which is long overdue. This qualitative study will draw from the available body of knowledge, the theories and good practices used by enabling programs to propose a quality framework for enabling programs in Australia that is nationally recognised

The proposed national quality framework for enabling programs in this study includes many of the practices that will ensure the continuity to have diversity in enabling programs while also maintaining a high level of academic quality in course design and instruction. The broad goals of the proposed quality framework for enabling programs, this study will argue, is to create transparency for the enabling programs, minimise barriers to progression to higher education, and maximise access, flexibility, and portability between different institutions.

George Lambrinidis

George Lambrinidis is the Theme Leader for the Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP) at Charles Darwin University, Australia. TEP is the main pathway for mature age students who do not have the requisite background for undergraduate study and many come from diverse backgrounds. His area of research interest includes pathways programs and in particular ways in which to improve quality learning outcomes, especially for external students studying online. His current research focusses on developing strategies to improve the retention and success of students through improved engagement. He is currently working with his team to implement the new accredited version of the program in 2017.

Dr Sulay Jalloh

Dr Sulay Jalloh is a multidisciplinary researcher lecturing in the Tertiary Enabling Program and in the Common Units at Charles Darwin University (CDU). Before joining CDU, he was a lecturer in the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages at the University of South Australia (UniSA). Sulay has a strong research focus and interest in enabling pathways, adult learning pedagogy, academic and cultural literacy and media representation of minority groups. He is currently developing a community driven intervention program to enable African families and youth, particularly from low SES backgrounds, the opportunity to explore options for nurturing higher education aspirations.

Tried and tested processes to improve retention and success in a level 3/4 certificate programme



Christine Beker

Otago Polytechnic

In 2014, in the Certificate in Health, which is Level 3 in the first semester, our team leader interviewed pre-enrolments on the waitlist for 2015, who did not have NCEA Level 2, to ensure they were aware of the factors that may impact on their retention and success, before they accepted their offer of place in a blended delivery programme. This process was designed so they could self-screen and some did withdraw. These students were advised of alternative F2F programmes that would be more suited to their needs.

In 2015, the interviews reduced the number of withdrawals from 12% in Semester One 2014 to 8% in Semester One 2015. An analysis of the non-completions revealed that only 18% were interviewed, and the remaining 82% were not interviewed, indicating that this process improved the completion and success rates. The non-completion rate in Semester One 2014 was 27% and in 2015 it was 22%. Therefore, there was a case for interviewing all students prior to acceptance, including those with NCEA Level 2, but given that this process could involve more than 250 students, we had to find an efficient way to manage it.

For 2016, to improve retention and success, we mostly selected students who had NCEA Level 2/3 English credits or equivalent level. The others on the waitlist were not offered a place. As a result about 60 potential students were referred to Foundation Studies Level 3. Those students who were accepted were also invited to a group interview, where the factors that may impact on retention and success were explained so they could self-screen. None decided to withdraw before the programme commenced. In Semester One 2016, only 3.8% of student withdrew during the semester compared to 8% in 2015. This represents a significant improvement in retention of 50%. The non-completion rate in 2016 remained the same as Semester One 2015 at 22%, so to further improve strategies for completion and success in 2017, we analysed the reasons why these students failed and found a strong correlation with the number of NCEA English credits. This indicates that we can use this finding to improve the success of the majority of our students, but retain the flexibility to accept students with experience in other educational contexts, who may succeed for different reasons.

Christine Beker

Christine Beker started as a Senior Lecturer at Otago Polytechnic in 2002 teaching ESOL. In 2007, she completed the transition to Foundation Learning by teaching on the new Certificate in Health Level 4 blended delivery programme. Prior to this in 2006, she completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Second Language Teaching from Massey University, and then a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Learning and Teaching from Otago Polytechnic in 2011 as a blended learner. Her background as an adult learner, and as a teacher in the same programme for the last ten years has made her aware of the factors that affect retention and success for adults, so she has made an analysis of these factors the subject of her conference presentation. Her original degree and teaching background is in Economics, so this has contributed to her analytical focus on a qualitative issue.

UOW College PASS: A flexibly-delivered student learning support program



Jann Roberts

College PASS Program Coordinator, University of Wollongong

In order to maximise the student learning experience, learning supports of various types are required. These include, for example, face-to-face supplementary subject support by teachers, online learning platform materials that are self-accessed by students, and peer mentoring. One of the existing proven methods of supporting students in their learning is to provide them with facilitated group study sessions. A key program that provides such support is PASS (Peer Assisted Study Sessions). The Centre for PASS at the University of Wollongong provides training for multiple tertiary institutions globally, to enable them to set up their own PASS programs. UOW College, the pathways college at the University of Wollongong, has had its own PASS program in place since 2008. The UOW College Academic Program caters for a wide variety of students, including domestic mature age students, and students straight out of high school (both domestic and international). The College delivers multiple courses, including Foundation pathways courses, Diploma courses and Vocational courses. Therefore, the UOW College PASS Program has been designed, using a flexible model, to accommodate the differences that exist between the student needs and the differences between the courses. Over time, PASS sessions of varying lengths have been introduced, and their delivery methods modified, according to the needs of the students. One innovation has been to embed the PASS session within an existing classroom. This does have implications in terms of moving slightly away from traditional PASS delivery methods. This paper discusses the uniquely flexible UOW College PASS Program that began essentially as a microcosm of the typically-sized university PASS program. It will be of interest to other Colleges providing a flexible group study program for their own diverse cohorts of students.

Jann Roberts

Jann Roberts is an academic staff member at UOW College, Wollongong, Australia. Jann holds dual roles at the College: UOWC PASS Program Coordinator and academic lecturer in the language and methods of mathematics. She has almost 20 years of teaching experience in Australia, mainly comprised of working in a higher education environment. Her professional interests include peer supported learning programs, designing collaborative learning activities and improving engagement of international students with the language of mathematics.

We hear you! Positive impacts of the changes made to the STEPS program

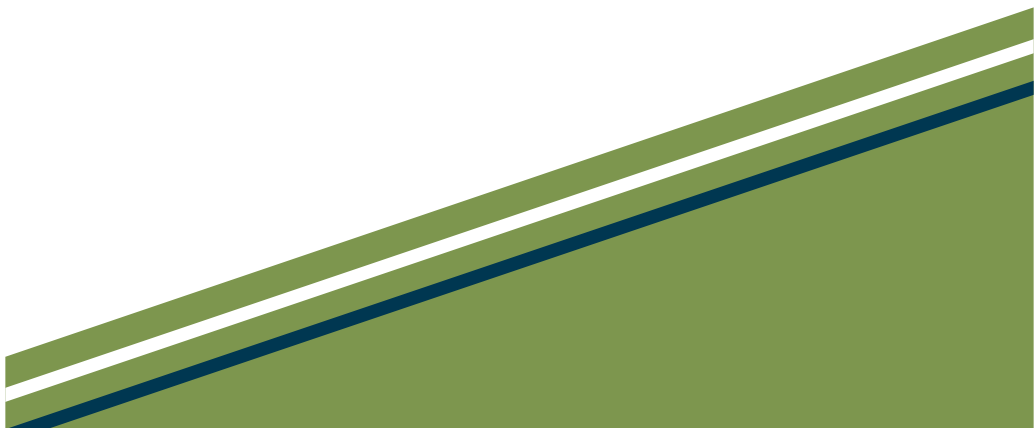


Dr Julie Willans
CQUniversity

Access to an education is a social justice concern, for it holds the promise of significant change to the student, which in turn, reverberates within their spheres of influence. For those students who are first in family learners, identified as being from a low socio-economic background, or whose engagement with formal learning may be distant and conjure a sometimes problematic memory, numerous challenges can arise to restrict their potential for success upon their return to formal study. In turn, Enabling education and educators face many challenges in ensuring their programs, institutional systems and support structures continue to assure adequate and appropriate preparation for such students' articulation to and success in undergraduate studies. Subsequent to a 2013 institutional review and the adoption of several recommendations, the 30 year old Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) program at CQUniversity Australia has responded to the changing tertiary environment by listening to its students and implementing change. To this end, greater flexibility, more tailored preparation, and focused support structures have proven to afford more equitable and accessible opportunities for its many students. This paper follows on the back of *Design for success: Did we get it right – Measuring the success of STEPS as a remodelled CQUniversity enabling offering* (Seary, Willans & Cook, 2016) and presents more recent feedback from students as evidence of ways in which the re-vamped program empowers students in realising their potential as capable, confident, well-prepared learners. Case study methodology afforded the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of students engaged in the program and invites the reader "into the setting being described" (Patton, 2002, p. 437). Within this context, qualitative data gathering tools yielded "thick description" (Stake, 2005, p. 450) and allowed for the student voice to emerge. Dominant themes were found to include increased confidence in self and preparedness for university; appreciation of flexible and equitable study options; and praise for the inclusive practices of STEPS staff. The paper argues that in offering greater flexibility to students, it goes a long way in providing equitable assess and maximum opportunities for them to succeed.

Dr Julie Willans

Dr Julie Willans is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Access Education in the Academic Learning Services Unit at CQUniversity's Rockhampton campus. She has taught Essay Writing, Report Writing and Preparation Skills for University in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) course at CQUniversity for 15 years. Her research background focuses on transformative learning theory and its application to adult learning in access education. She has a number of academic publications in this area and she has presented at many national and international conferences. More recent research focuses on strategies to enhance Access education.



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