

Abstracts – Showcases

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Enabling learning through innovative assessments

Pranit Anand. University of Wollongong.

Enabling education programs in Australia represents students with the most diverse learning needs and styles. This diversity presents a unique set of opportunities and challenges for educators to effectively engage students through learning and teaching activities. Assessments have been demonstrated to be one of the most effective motivators for student learning. Apart from the obvious intended alignment of assessments to stated learning outcomes, assessments can also have unintended ‘consequences’. Poorly designed assessments may not indicate students’ true potential in future studies and work, and further dis-engage them from the learning activities. Educators in enabling programs should be encouraged to explore innovative assessment practices that are more effective in engaging students in the learning activities, while being able to provide valid indications of students’ capabilities.

Assessments in enabling programs should aim to provide a variety of assessments styles for students to engage with, focus on work integrated learning, should be individually and emotionally relevant, emphasise the process of working on assessments tasks to develop formative skills and less, but better quality summative assessments that do not have significant unintended negative consequences on students. These aims have been successfully implemented in an enabling course through tasks like Digital Storybooks, Investigative Case Studies, collaborative projects with international organisations and institutions, appropriately designed group work, open book and open internet examinations, and supported, contextualised questioning in written examinations. Feedback from students and teachers indicates that these assessments are more aligned with the course outcomes and encourages student learning. Students further indicate that they felt the assessments enabled them to learn more effectively. Teachers observed that through these assessments the students were able to provide more thoughtful and meaningful responses.

This presentation will showcase some of these innovative assessment practices, and share strategies for implementing these ideas in other enabling courses in Australia and overseas.

Theorising enabling pedagogies

Anna Bennett, Sara Motta, Emma Hamilton, Cathy Burgess, Bronwyn Relf, Kim Gray, Sharlene Leroy-Dyer & Jim Albright. University of Newcastle.

This showcase presentation concentrates on the conference theme of ‘Enabling Learning and Enabling Teaching’. The presentation outlines the main themes that emerged from a 2017 study of enabling pedagogies at the University of Newcastle, NSW. Enabling programs have been running at UON since 1974, with over 55,000 students enrolling over this time. The project sought to make explicit and visible the pedagogical approaches of enabling educators, based on interviews with the 30 teaching staff and 21 students who participated. This is the first time this kind of research focussed on contextualising the *overarching* theory of pedagogic practice across UON enabling programs has been undertaken to situate it within wider international educational theory, due to prior concentration on other foci, including more studies about specific teaching practices. This presentation draws on findings and theorising from selected sections of the project report and highlights the importance of care, inclusivity, recognition, empowerment, flexibility, reflexivity, various forms of scaffolding (assessment, conceptual and emotional scaffolding, Rosiek, 2003) and collaboration. We found that,

as Bernstein (1971) explained, learning about ‘powerful’, ‘culturally privileged’ or ‘abstract’ knowledge in the form of the disciplines is necessary for students to perform successfully in the mainstream. In particular, using students’ ‘experiential knowledge’ to providing ‘epistemic access’ to powerful knowledge (Bernstein, 1971; Morrow 2009; Young, 2013) is at the heart of enabling pedagogies. The Freirean concept of critical pedagogy (1970) also emerged as important in framing what enabling teachers aim to achieve in terms of dialogical approaches and developing critical thinking when approaching discipline concepts. However, because of their context as university pathways and preparatory programs, enabling programs are different to the kinds of radical reconfiguration of knowledge that some Freirean pedagogic methodologies advocate. Enabling programs, in contrast, work to provide democratic access to powerful knowledge.

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Connecting students to enhance early success in pathway programs.

Michael Brickhill & Sue Muloin. Southern Cross University.

Despite the growth of pathway programs such as Diplomas, there has been little research on students’ experience in these programs. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a support strategy offered to pathway students within Southern Cross University College. This strategy consists of two key components: weekly workshops and a closed Facebook group. Students participated in a short online survey once each year over three years (2015-2017) to determine their awareness and experience of these two strategies, as well as obtain feedback to further improve these initiatives. Survey respondents (N=181, 29.6% response rate, 36% domestic, 62% international, 2% not disclosed) were primarily Business and Health pathway students. Survey responses were analysed and used to (i) inform strategies to enhance the support being offered and (ii) articulate findings of subsequent analyses. Over seven study sessions, 631 students (22% domestic, 78% international) enrolled in a core pathway unit, within which workshops were timetabled. Regression analyses, correlations, and t-tests were performed to analyse the extent to which workshop attendance contributed towards students’ (i) achievement in the core unit and (ii) grade point average (GPA) within a study session. Preliminary findings suggest that workshop attendance may explain up to 67% of variation in students’ final core unit score and up to 68% of variation in their GPA. Students attending workshops also tended to achieve higher final unit scores and GPAs than those who did not attend the workshops. Students generally reported both the Facebook page and workshops useful in terms of providing additional academic support and an opportunity to connect with other students. While these preliminary results suggest participation in SCU College support strategies positively influence students’ success in their first session of study, additional analysis is required to further inform support strategies, particularly for International students.

“They’ve been an essential group of students over a long period of time”: Using oral history evidence to determine the impacts of the University of Newcastle’s Open Foundation Program on both the University and its regions.

Rosalie Bunn. University of Newcastle.

As part of doctoral studies on the history and impacts of the Open Foundation Program (OFP) thirty eight oral history interviews with university decision-makers, lecturers, counsellors, learning and disability support staff were conducted and respondents were asked what they thought the impact of OFP had been. This presentation reports on their responses which covered impacts on students and their families; on staff who were associated with OFP; on the university as an institution; and on the wider regions in which OFP is taught. Respondents reported that impacts on students included providing greater skill sets among the student population; enhancing the lives of its students by providing them with institutionalised cultural capital and contributing to self-growth of students. These respondents also observed that OFP had contributed to students’ growth as citizens by broadening their collective consciousness. It also had an impact on the families of students by making university study more accessible and normative among a population who often had little experience of higher education. Respondents reported OFPs impacts on staff by contributing to the development of an enabling ethos and a particular philosophy of teaching. There were also impacts on the University of Newcastle (UON) through provision of student numbers to meet enrolment loads and funding. OFP was seen to enhance the reputation of UON and meet its equity responsibilities. It was clear that long term employees of the university saw a shift over time from OFP as a philanthropic endeavour that aimed to provide a link between the university and community to one that was more closely academic and strategic for the University of Newcastle (UON). Finally, these respondents commented on the impacts of OFP on the Hunter and Central Coast regions where this tertiary entry program produced a vast range of new professionals and educated citizenry.

One size does not fit all: How to accommodate diversity in enabling programs.

Charmaine Davis & Jonathan Green. University of Southern Queensland.

Powerful opposing forces are acting on the higher education sector. On one side are imperatives to widen participation to meet demands for an educated post-industrial workforce and to provide a mechanism through which underrepresented groups can access the privileges of an education. On the other side are tendencies to regard university funding as a burden - unless it can prove its worth through generic quality outcomes. This battle is evident in the enabling sub-sector, which has a critical role in the achievement of a more educated and equitable workforce, but is coming under increasing pressure to achieve greater consistency and comparability across programs.

While a framework of sector-wide standards is desirable, enabling programs also should be developed in response to student need. We demonstrate, by tracing the development of the Tertiary Preparation Program Intensive Pathway (TPPIP) at the University of Southern Queensland, that preserving the capacity of an enabling program to be responsive to the unique needs of its diverse student groups is vital to its ongoing effectiveness.

The TPPIP was conceived as a HEPPP-funded intensive mode summer offering of USQ’s long-running Tertiary Preparation Program. However, unlike the regular program, which was designed for a more mature demographic, TPPIP was implemented in response to the rising number of Year 12

leavers in Queensland who do not undertake an academic pathway at high school, and are unlikely to meet university entry requirements.

An analysis of student outcomes and articulation, pre- and post- program competencies, demographic characteristics, staff and student evaluations, and a comparison with other programs indicated that TPPIP did not fully respond to the needs of the specific student cohort. The application of this comprehensive review framework has resulted, therefore, in the accreditation of a new, more-responsive enabling program.

This presentation shows how enabling education, through effective program evaluation, can remain adaptive even as it moves towards establishing broad standards.

How and why to get students online: An analysis of non-assessable discussion boards.

Julia Doyle & Garth Brennan. Southern Cross University.

Discussion boards are a component of most online university courses. Student interaction on discussion boards has been equated with increased motivation (Duemer et al., 2002) and with enhanced grades (Cheng et al., 2011; Dalelio, 2013). As much literature in this area has been conducted on assessable discussion board posts (cf. Robinson, 2011), it remains to be seen what motivates students to post when they are not being assessed, and how non-assessable discussion board engagement may enhance student learning. Given that much research in this area focuses on the quality of responses rather than question content (Ringler et al., 2015), this presentation will evaluate discussion board question types and investigate online students' perceived value of them.

The context of the study is an academic literacy unit within Southern Cross University's enabling program, the PSP. The two discussion board task types compared in this study were those requiring individual responses and those which encouraged students to interact with each other. Using descriptive statistics the two discussion board question types are analysed to ascertain which task elicited more responses, and to account for any correlation between the frequency of posts and the weekly question type. Finally, the results of an online focus group of student use and perceived value of discussion boards will be presented. This research presented aims to determine future discussion board practices for the unit being researched in order to enhance learning for online students. The presentation aims to foster discussion about the type of tasks enabling programs need to consider when implementing discussion board activities, as informed by student practices and student voice.

Health vocational pathways: Enabling secondary to tertiary transition.

Beth Fitzgerald & Robyn Gandell. Unitec, New Zealand.

In 2013 New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) instituted vocational pathways into secondary schools. This enabled tertiary institutions to provide a bridge from secondary schools into tertiary vocational programmes. Working initially with four secondary schools, Unitec Institute of Technology (Unitec) began developing a Health vocational pathway at year 12, Level 2. Students attended an on campus Unitec health course for one day a week as tertiary students obtaining credits towards NZQA standards that are relevant to their health pathway. To date, some of the challenges we have faced include: negotiating four days at school and one day at Unitec; four terms versus two semesters; negotiating standards to be delivered; and engaging industry.

Effectiveness of this Health vocational pathway is evident from increasing student numbers in our courses and continual positive feedback from the students. Schools have requested more courses and we are now providing courses at both Levels 2 and 3 for the Health pathway. More secondary schools are asking to join our vocational pathway network and we have added Early Childhood education to our Health pathway.

Through this pathway we are enabling our learners to transition more easily into tertiary studies in their chosen vocation. By providing engagement in tertiary study over the final two years of their secondary education, students experience transition over an extended period of time which may enable greater success in both secondary and tertiary education.

Enabling transition: The preparation of post-graduate students during their time of transition back into study.

Anne Maree Hays & Sue Sharp. Edith Cowan University.

The efficacy and success of enabling programs in transitioning students to undergraduate university study is well documented. While universities do provide research and study skills to support students once post-graduate study has commenced, there seems little evidence of programs to prepare incoming post-graduate students returning to study. In 2014, staff from the Edith Cowan University Preparation Course (UniPrep) developed a short two-day course for the Western Australian Police (WAPOL) staff, providing participants with preparation for post-graduate university study. Like many people returning to study, the WAPOL participants were diverse in their experience of university, from a position of recognized prior learning but no higher education experience, qualifications from a distant past, to recent degree qualifications. Undertaking further university post-graduate study was considered educational extension and/or a pathway to promotion. The success of this short course led to the development of a Post Graduate Preparation Course (PGP) and was extended to Graduate Diploma of Teaching students at Edith Cowan University in 2016.

This Post Graduate Preparation Course (PGP) designed and conducted in a supportive and hands on environment, covered independent learning techniques, research and essay writing processes and navigating university communication and library systems. Support to understand the requirements of on-line study and access course advice in the study area of interest was also provided. Practical skills and knowledge to build confidence to successfully undertake postgraduate study were a focus. This showcase will share the perceptions of participants across these two consecutive short courses, regarding the efficacy of their participation in the PGP courses. The evidence presented will support the case for universities to consider PGP courses for students who may be considering post graduate studies, but lack the confidence in returning to study after some period of time, are new to the institution or who may never studied at a university before.

A bridge to enabling: Preparing students from refugee backgrounds for the cultural and linguistic challenges of Australian higher education.

Evonne Irwin & Seamus Fagan. University of Newcastle.

Education forms an integral part of resettlement in new communities for people from refugee backgrounds and along with housing, health and food, forms what has been described as the ‘fourth pillar’ of humanitarian assistance. The University of Newcastle’s enabling programs have long played

a part in this resettlement by welcoming steady numbers of students from refugee backgrounds for more than 10 years. Completing an enabling program by meeting the complex linguistic and cultural requirements inhered in such study can be challenging for these students—and others from language backgrounds other than English. Likewise, supporting the linguistic and cultural learning needs of these students is challenging for our programs.

This showcase presents qualitative data from students who participated in a three-week language and culture pre-enabling bridging course designed to facilitate the transition of students from language backgrounds other than English into their enabling study. The course was developed as a significant output from an OLT-funded project, '(Re)claiming social capital: improving language and cultural pathways for refugee students into Australian Higher Education'. This cross-institutional, longitudinal project studied the educational experiences and transitions of students from refugee backgrounds entering higher education from three diverse pathways: VET–Enabling–University, IEC–University, and High School–University.

Implementing a responsive design, the bridging course aimed to prepare students to navigate the linguistic and cultural challenges of studying in an Australian enabling program. The focus of this presentation will be on what students reported was most useful in the course in terms of their preparation for studying their enabling program. These include aspects across a range of domains including academic and information literacies; English language; practical and technical concerns; and concerns related to physical comfort and orientation. The outcomes from this evaluation have informed teaching practice and modifications to curriculum design as well as served to highlight the specific challenges of students from refugee backgrounds and language backgrounds other than English entering our open access enabling programs.

What's so positive about Positive Psychology in an enabling program?

Trixie James & Karen Seary. Central Queensland University.

Enabling programs focus on developing study skills and applicable knowledge to assist students with their transition to higher education. Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) offers a unique unit of study which introduces students to Positive Psychology. This 12 week unit, Positive Learning for University (PLU), takes students on a personal and academic journey where they learn about the theories that underpin Positive Psychology and strategies to apply these concepts to their role as students. In doing this, it is hoped that students will gain valuable skills that are transferable to life and they will experience significant improvement in their mental health, well-being and self-efficacy. PLU was introduced into the STEPS curriculum in 2012 when STEPS underwent a substantial remodel. It is one of twelve units that students can elect to complete as part of their STEPS study plan. Since its inception, PLU has continued to modify the program to maintain currency with the latest research within the field of Positive Psychology. The showcase will outline the evolving nature of the unit and share the concepts that have had the most significant impacts on the student's lives during their enrolment. The CHOOSE Happiness Model (Sharp, 2007) underpins the unit structure and the concepts imparted all align to this model. CHOOSE is an acronym for the six key strategies for happiness: Clarity, Health, Optimism, Others, Strengths and Enjoyment (Sharp, 2007). Each module introduces a number of positive psychology concepts that students learn about and then apply to their own journeys. Unit evaluations demonstrate the influence of this unit in changing student's perceptions and mindsets towards study and life in general. The unit is delivered via an online learning management system (LMS) and the teaching approaches employed are designed to ensure student engagement is maintained.

Rediscovering Science: Building success upon students' decision to re-engage with science as adult learners.

Heath Jones & Catherine Burgess. University of Newcastle.

Recent increases in university STEM enrolments (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) defy long-term declines in Year 11 and 12 students taking the same subjects. As a result, many first-year STEM students have inadequate foundations for their studies, ultimately leading to major problems with confidence and self-efficacy. Subsequent attrition rates from STEM courses pose significant problems for universities and policy makers alike.

Enabling programmes play a key role laying solid foundations for students new to STEM. Our PeRSO Project (Pedagogies to Re-engage STEM Outcomes) is identifying equity and opportunity issues surrounding our students' decision to reengage with STEM as adult learners. We are exploring why enabling student return to science and the challenges they face. The outcomes from this study will inform teaching practise to improve learning outcomes for enabling STEM students.

Here we present preliminary results from a study of 336 enabling and 70 first-year STEM students at the University of Newcastle. Our initial results show that 80% of our students choose STEM for the career prospects, even though two-thirds have neither parent in the field. Confidence also plays a role, with 66% now feeling more confident to study science as adults rather than school students. We discuss these findings in the context of other factors relating to equity and opportunity and suggest ways in which enabling education can better meet the needs of these students for future success. Ongoing work and future project plans are also discussed.

Curriculum supporting Aboriginal student engagement and success in enabling programs.

Sharron King, Tanya Weiler & Myfanwy Tilley. University of South Australia.

The UniSA College Aboriginal Pathway Program (APP) is a tailored outreach enabling program being delivered at four regional centres in South Australia. The APP 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 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. The APP program is a re-conceptualisation of UniSA College's Foundation Studies Program, building on previous UniSA regional pilot programs and drawing from findings delivered in the Path+Ways Final Report (Fredericks et al 2015). It is an 18 month, fee-free program consisting of 9 consecutive units covering the skills required for successful university-level study. Each unit comprises a mix of intensive face to face teaching and tutorial sessions during alternate weeks. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal regional staff provide individual tutoring and pastoral care to students, and this intensive, scaffolded support is instrumental in empowering students' agency in their learning and success. Aboriginal Australians' knowledges are given prominence within the curriculum through the delivery of a regional specific Aboriginal knowledges course and a land management course, tailored with input from local indigenous experts. Students' academic, digital and numerical literacies are developed to the same level as traditional curriculum models. This presentation describes the outcomes of ongoing qualitative research measuring students' responses to, and success in, the APP program. The research delivers strong confirmation of the importance and effectiveness of the twofold approach to transforming traditional curricula through the delivery of culturally informed curricula on a community basis and of

encouraging students' agency in their learning success through developing self-awareness, time management, learning strategies and motivation.

Enabling learning how to learn in an introductory chemistry course: The Learning Process Model.

Teri Ko. University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Hikitia Te Ora – Certificate in Health Sciences (CertHSc) – is a one year foundation programme designed to prepare Māori and Pacific students for university study in the health sciences. One of our key aims is to develop independent learners with skill sets that ensure academic success at bachelor level study – in other words, learners who know how to learn.

CertHSc students are introduced to the Learning Process Model (LPM), which describes what they can do before, during, and after a lecture to maximise their learning. This practice was embedded in our introductory chemistry course through weekly open-book tutorial tests. Students were allowed hand-written notes only, which meant they were required to process notes and review content each week.

Student course evaluations indicate students found these tests particularly helpful as they forced them to write their own notes and study chemical concepts more regularly. Similarly, students who were well-prepared for the open-book tests performed better in other closed-book assessments. More importantly, students who progressed to bachelor level study confirmed that they benefited from this practice as they had learned how to summarise and condense content, and were in the habit of regular study. The cohort pass rate for the Stage 1 chemistry paper has increased from 54% to 89% following course re-development, which included the implementation of the weekly open book tests.

“Sometimes it can be daunting going into distance study, but I never felt like I was alone”: Approaches used in an online program to provide a holistic learning experience for enabling students.

Jenny McDougall. Central Queensland University.

Though there are successes reported in distance and online learning, there is still a perception that this approach is inferior to the on-campus experience, and that overcoming a sense of isolation presents a particular challenge for students. Certainly, when the STEPS enabling program at CQUniversity branched into distance and online learning in 2006, there were many concerns that the holistic philosophy of the program would be compromised. Over ten years on, it seems timely to reflect on what we have learnt about distance and online learning in this context. The aim of this study is to compare the levels of support experienced by distance students with those of on-campus students in an enabling program, and to determine the aspects of support that best meet the needs of distance students.

The study used a mixed methods approach, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. The first source of data was anonymous student evaluations for a core subject over four terms. The second source was an online survey of distance and internal students who had completed the same subject. The personal (social, emotional) and academic dimensions of learning (Reason, Terenzini &

Domingo, 2007) provided the conceptual lens for thematic analysis of the qualitative data. Findings suggest that distance students were as satisfied with the levels of support they were given as on-campus students, and agreed that online resources, such as lecture recordings and short instructional videos, helped them to feel a part of the group and personalised the learning experience. The messages of support from their lecturers were especially important. Though rates of attrition were still higher for this group, the reflections shared by distance students at the end of term mirror those of their on-campus counterparts, and suggest that online learning is not just adequate, but can lead to personally fulfilling, even transformative experiences.

Liminal states – betwixt and between: Transition pedagogy in the pre-degree space.

Lisa Moody. James Cook University.

This paper explores the contested and growing movement to post compulsory schooling as a result of government agendas to widen participation in higher education. The paper is informed by a small scale scoping project focused on exploring the understandings, enactments, and contentions surrounding transition pedagogy and ways in which to best support students in liminal phases at university. In particular, this paper explores the ways in which stakeholders in a regional university have understood the role of transition pedagogy and associated tensions in informing their role and supporting students transitioning into higher education via pre-degree pathways. Understandings, enactments, visions, the roles of resilience and community, and points of clarity and tension for stakeholders are discussed with a view to extending a conversation regarding best practice pedagogy for pre-degree spaces.

The case for convergence of online courses with on-campus offerings.

Anthony Morison. University of Newcastle.

Two of the most significant issues impacting online learning in higher education are lack of belonging and high attrition. A case is made here for convergence of offerings to both on-campus and online students. In this way, online students share enhanced belonging and community with on-campus students. This initiative pilots the convergence of both on-campus and online students in two open access enabling business course offerings at the University Of Newcastle, in the first semester of 2017.

Seeking to make online education a more personal experience, this initiative treats online students like on-campus students, by trialling a number of innovative pedagogies. These included an introductory YouTube welcome video, synchronous weekly ‘live lecture broadcasts’ through Collaborate Ultra and a student led Facebook site. The outcomes saw an 11% increase in retention of online students with a 5% increase in median grade; over 300 views of the introductory video and an average of 13 students each week logging into the live lecture. In addition, an on/off campus community of over 70 Facebook members is interacting regularly. Student feedback through surveys shows enhanced feelings of belonging, perceived support and friendship.

These outcomes demonstrate the effectiveness of convergence as a teaching pedagogy in online courses. With currently high rates of attrition and detachment of online students, the relevance of these outcomes to five of the six NAEEA Conference themes is clear. Advanced learning is demonstrated through improved student grades and success in enabling programs is enhanced through

improved retention and sense of belonging. Teaching practice and curriculum design is strengthened through refined pedagogy. Online learning is augmented through enhanced use of technology. The contribution to scholarship is a successful pilot initiative which can be further researched and tested. The contribution to practice could potentially elevate the efficiency and effectiveness of online higher education.

“Are you there yet?” The lack of success of the NESB men in Australian enabling programs.

Dino Murtic. University of South Australia.

‘Mathan Yered Yousufi’ is an *archetypical* NESB male student enrolled in an enabling program at University of South Australia. Ethnically speaking, he may be from Nepal or Myanmar, but most likely he or his parents were born in war-ravaged countries such as South Sudan or Afghanistan. In previous years, Mathan would start attending the enabling education immediately after completing the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Recently, however, it is more likely that Mathan has attempted or even completed a high school in Australia. Yet, the Australian secondary education experience won’t be of a significant help to Mathan once he tries to enter a university degree via the enabling program. It is more likely that he will give up early or fail overall at the end of first semester. As such, Mathan is a member of the specific equity group that has one of the lowest successful rate across enabling sector in Australia.

One may wonder why Mathan is not performing well. Is it because of his previously documented unhappiness within the Australian schooling system that made him feel ‘angry and frustrated’ (Mansouri & Trembath 2005)? Perhaps, high school teachers in the past and enabling tutors in the present, have never tried to fully understand Mathan and his specific cultural and/or gendered needs!? Could it also be that Mathan has perception of education in general, and literacy education in particular, as overly ‘girly’ (Watson, Kehler & Martino 2010)? Is the answer for Mathan’s educational trouble lies in his early *muscular socialisation* and/or *racial ostracism*!? It could be, but we do not know for certain. This presentation, nevertheless, will unpack the above mentioned dilemmas. But further research, exemplified through the qualitative set of interviews with Mathan and alike, is needed if we want to understand better the NESB male and his needs in enabling education.

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An exploratory case study on the implementation of learning from video modelling examples: An instructional strategy to enhance learning in a mathematics course in an enabling program.

Jasmine Ng & Kung Keat Teoh. University of South Australia.

Videos are commonly used in online learning as resources to provide support and to impart subject matter content. Research findings indicate students’ learning engagement are affected by the different

methods used in video productions (Guo, Kim & Rubin, 2014). In addition, shorter videos are found to be much more engaging and effective. Students engage more with videos that are perceived to give more values: enabling them to successfully complete assessment tasks (Lin, Aiken, Seaton, Douglas, Greco, Thoms & Schatz, 2016). In terms of instructional strategies, learning from modelling examples is shown to be effective. This strategy uses a model to demonstrate how to perform a task. Research shows that it enhances students' self-confidence in performing the skills learned from the videos (Hoogerheide, van Wermeskerken, Loyens, & van Gog, 2016). Furthermore, in mathematics, learning from examples presented in a sequential manner is effectively comparable with traditional classroom method (Zhu & Simon 1987). This case study discusses the implementation of learning from modelling examples in the creation of short videos for a mathematics course in an enabling program in UniSA College, University of South Australia. The primary purposes of this study are to explain how the videos are created and to assess students' feedback on their interaction with the videos. Data were collected using a survey that consists of quantitative and open-ended questions. Results indicate that learning from video modelling examples is a useful approach in engaging students in their mathematics learning. Students expressed positive preferences to the way the videos were presented and believe that the videos contributed to their understanding and ability to apply the mathematical skills learned in performing related tasks. This exploratory case study serves to provide preliminary findings. Future studies should involve large sample group to draw more conclusive results on its effectiveness in a non-face to face learning environment.

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How did a small group of successful Tertiary Preparation Program students manage their undergraduate studies?

Gary Orth & Clare Robinson. *University of Southern Queensland*.

A longitudinal study was conducted with a small group of successful Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) students to investigate how they managed their undergraduate studies. In an earlier study we found that successful students in the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) enabling program demonstrated specific characteristics that nurtured student resilience and persistence. One recommendation of this research was to conduct a longitudinal study with these students throughout their undergraduate studies to investigate whether the common characteristics identified in the earlier study were critical for student success in their future studies. The research follows a few years of the undergraduate journey of a small number of students who volunteered to participate. Completing an undergraduate degree as a mature-aged student can be extremely challenging in terms of external factors that conflict with studying. However the outcomes from the diverse students in this group

indicate that despite personal set-backs, the ability to organise and plan is what really counts towards being successful.

Foundation Mathematics as a pathway to success in hurdle subjects.

Patrick Peacock. James Cook University.

Mathematics focused subjects are an often cited hurdle subject in a number of degrees, particularly in the first year of courses such as Education and Science. As a response to identified gaps in student preparedness, the Pathways Program at James Cook University (JCU) developed a new subject. In addition, the intent of this subject is to equip students from diverse backgrounds with the necessary skills in order to enable them to successfully participate in higher education. This subject is collaboratively designed by a working group of representative academics from the university who are involved in the first year experience for each of their respective courses. This resulted in a diploma level subject where the content and skill development reflects the attributes necessary to be successful in subsequent bachelor programs.

This showcase presentation analyses the performance of students who have come through this diploma program and compares their success to first year students. A greater focus is placed on two subjects in particular. These subjects are a first year education subject based around numeracy in education frameworks and a first year mathematics subject that is a prerequisite for many further subjects. Institutional data suggests first year students often struggle with these subjects and, as such, they are established as hurdle subjects. While the Pathways Program at JCU is relatively young, early data indicates a promising level of success in these subsequent hurdle subjects for students coming through this diploma pathway.

Colour Connect: An innovative approach to adult numeracy.

Desley Pidgeon. Central Queensland University.

In the data driven 21st century, basic skills in calculation, data analysis, estimation and mathematical interpretation enable productive participation in society. A level of numeracy is critical for adults to be self-empowered in making every day decisions. However, adult learning programs tend to focus predominately on literacy, not numeracy. Research suggest that numeracy programs that do exist tend to rely on traditional pedagogy of repetition, memorisation and standardised testing that does not always meet the learning needs of the adult.

Through the use of DeBono's theories of cognition, and researching neuroplasticity of learning, I have developed a process to support enabling students' understanding of various mathematical concepts. This process uses colour to teach mathematics creatively to support cognitive connections.

The aim of constructing this process was to trial a way of teaching mathematics that provided an environment that was both enjoyable and safe to make mistakes in. The method was trialled with approximately 120 students in the STEPS course in term 1 (2016 & 2017) and term 2 (2017). The colour connect process allocates colour as a coding mechanism for initially starting a mathematical question. Using the colour connect method also supports cognitive recognition of "what to do" next when completing a mathematical question and or problem.

Initial findings from feedback through the anonymous unit review completed by students, suggests that the process is providing positive influence on the comprehension of mathematical content

covered in the course. Students commented that the colour connections helped them to remember the mathematical process.

Exploring the transition from educational disadvantage to leadership at an Australian university.

Bianca Price & Jennifer Stokes. University of South Australia.

Pathways programs offer a transformative educational experience, which provides opportunities for individuals to access higher education and contribute to academia. As more diverse students engage with university, they contribute in multiple and sometimes unanticipated ways. Research demonstrates the benefits of mentoring in educational contexts; however, the impact of pathways students in mentoring and other leadership roles is largely unexplored.

The UniSA College Leadership Program was established in 2012 and provides an opportunity for successful enabling program alumni to return and mentor commencing students. Through examining the contribution made by these diverse Student Leaders at an Australian university, this case study provides evidence of the benefits that can be achieved through leadership and peer mentoring. The leadership role facilitates their own learning as leaders guide new students through the transition process and introduction to academic culture, while also offering opportunities for reflection on how far the leaders have developed as adult learners.

Once at risk of exclusion from higher education, these students have demonstrated their leadership capacity alongside altruistic behaviours. Many of these student leaders joined the University from traditionally underrepresented groups, including low socioeconomic status backgrounds. Many have also suffered negative educational experiences; yet, these students have flourished in the tertiary environment. Through their success in a pathways program, they gained entrance into undergraduate degrees, and have been awarded leadership roles across the wider University. Using social learning theory (SLT) (Bandura 1977) as a framework to examine the transition from a deficit to a leadership position, this paper investigates the rewards presented by greater diversity in student leadership. As testament to the success of this program, many past Student Leaders are now exemplars of undergraduate success and role models within their disciplinary field.

Is an intensive tertiary preparation mathematics course for school leavers effective?

Clare Robinson & Lorna Douglas. University of Southern Queensland.

USQ offers an intensive Tertiary Preparation program in the third semester of each year for students that have just completed Year 12, but who may not have achieved the required university entrance result at school. This intensive program is comprised of Academic English, Study Management and a mathematics course and is delivered on campus in two 2 week blocks. The first two week block is in December followed by a break of 4 weeks. The second two week block is in January, followed by the examination period.

The intensive mathematics course that most students enrol in covers basic arithmetic, proportional reasoning, the metric system, graphing, basic statistics and an introduction to algebra. These topics are part of the school syllabus that is covered prior to Year 11 at school. Over several offerings of the Intensive Program, it had been noted by teaching staff that students appeared disinterested in the mathematics classes and that class attendance dropped off markedly in the second two week block.

Despite many of these school leavers scoring poorly in the entrance diagnostic tests, teachers queried whether the mathematics course was effective in its current form. In order to determine whether this perception was correct, comparisons of achievement on the entry test and the final course examination were made for the cohort that completed the core mathematics course in January 2017. An exit survey was also used to determine student perceptions of the usefulness of the mathematics course.

The results of this research indicated that there was a strong positive correlation between student achievements in the entry test and exam. Analysis of student performance on specific questions indicated that there was an overall improvement in the understanding of arithmetic topics and the exit survey showed that at least half of the students felt that the course had improved their understanding and skills in mathematics.

Setting the strategic directions for change: Using appreciative inquiry to build organisational capacity for enabling education.

Kate Sheppard. James Cook University.

The trend to expand access and participation in higher education is clearly apparent in Australian educational policy, most recently articulated in the Bradley Report (Bradley et al., 2008). To support the goals of widening participation, many universities provide students with enabling or pathways courses to support students who had previously not accessed university to transition successfully into higher education. Central to the success of these programs is strong institutional support of widening participation and enabling education, when the widening participation agenda permeates the consciousness of the university. This ‘consciousness’ includes the domains of organisational culture, organisational structures and processes, teaching capacity, and student support structures. Therefore, supporting student access and participation in university relies on institutional capacity to simultaneously and coherently engage each of these domains.

The response to widening participation policy at James Cook University (JCU) included the development of a new open access pathways program, the Diploma of Higher Education. This was a significant organisational change, which required whole of institution engagement with enabling education. This presentation explores how JCU has used the framework of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001) to initiate cultural change around enabling education through creating a shared language and ownership of pathways education across the institution. This strengths-based, collaborative approach to organisational development has significantly altered the way that enabling work is done at JCU, with positive outcomes that have resonated throughout both institutional structures and the broader student community as evidenced by student achievement data and altered practice architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008) across the institution.

Innovation through design: Creating a digital literacy course at UniSA College.

Jennifer Stokes, Rebecca Godwin & Cameron McTernan. University of South Australia.

New students benefit from learning experiences which build digital literacies for success in higher education and beyond. This paper outlines the design and delivery of a digital literacy course at UniSA College. Digital literacy provides an opportunity for educators to employ innovative pedagogy to engage diverse students with university education. Digital literacies are ‘the individual and social skills needed to effectively interpret, manage, share and create meaning in the growing range of

digital technologies' (Dudeney, Hockly & Pegrum 2013, p. 2). These skills include design, composition, content production, critical and ethical practice, and embody other new literacies such as information literacy and critical literacy. Through a focus on digital literacy, it is possible to better prepare students for both university study and active Twenty-first Century citizenship.

This creative digital production course has been developed in an Australian enabling program using Universal Design Learning principles to support diverse learners (CAST 2011). It is one of the few specific digital literacy courses available worldwide. The innovative course design provides engaging and inclusive curricula, which builds student confidence and capability at a university level. The course culminates in the production of a digital media project according to industry and university criteria, which demonstrates students' developing digital competency. Students create advanced projects including apps, games, websites, augmented reality and virtual reality content. Now in its third year of delivery, the course has received outstanding student evaluations, and its unique design has led to news stories and research presentations at national and international conferences, including an invited student showcase at the 2016 Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education conference. This paper demonstrates the possibilities of digital learning: here, educators can employ digital technologies and an inclusive, constructivist approach to teach complex concepts through familiar tools and create outstanding outcomes for new students.

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TEP Start: A new initiative to enable enabling students at Charles Darwin University.

James Valentine & Janelle Marrington. Charles Darwin University.

To better prepare students for study in the Tertiary Enabling Program (TEP) at Charles Darwin University (CDU), the Week 1 curriculum for all TEP units at CDU this year has been dedicated to a new initiative called TEP Start. TEP Start was introduced to increase student engagement early in the semester, build student confidence and give students the skills they needed to succeed in their studies. With a student cohort consisting of ~80% of students studying externally, TEP Start was designed for the external learner with the expectation that students would engage and interact with the TEP Start learning materials online through Blackboard (CDU's learning management system). This online engagement included classes, game-based learning activities and micro-lectures that focused on topics such as time management, prioritisation, motivation, learning online successfully, navigating Blackboard and academic integrity. Students could access and engage with TEP Start materials and activities two weeks before the semester started. This allowed students to ease into online learning and allowed them to begin working at their own pace.

The initial outcomes of TEP Start are highly encouraging. Feedback from internal and external students was overwhelmingly positive about their TEP Start experience. In particular, students found the online classes, the time management information and the opportunity to become familiar with Blackboard before their units started to be the most helpful aspects of TEP Start. The vast majority of students stated they felt more prepared and confident for study after completing TEP Start. In the

weeks following TEP Start, there was a noted increase in the level of unit engagement, attendance in online classes and the completion of early assessment tasks in each unit.

Innovations in a university pathway curriculum.

Gwendolen Warnick. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

As we work towards improving digital literacy and blended learning designs across the language education landscape, the impetus to design innovative curricula that will remain relevant as technology continues to rapidly transform the way people communicate only gets stronger. With adaptive learning technologies and mobile learning expected to be widespread within one year and AI in sight (NMC Horizon Report, 2017), how can we as curriculum designers and educators enable students to successfully develop the 21st century skills they will need to cope in their constantly changing environment? Looking with a wider lens to the demands on people in the workforce is a start; five of the top ten skills needed in 2020 are skills curricula can prioritise (World Economic Forum 2016). By integrating such skills like collaboration, negotiation and critical thinking and including activities that stimulate and harness creativity and problem solving skills, curricula in an academic tertiary context can provide the benefits of well-designed and rigorously-tested material while being forward looking.

A university pathway course curriculum has begun to include these skills explicitly in its course material, ensuring that its language learners have the opportunity to prepare adequately for university and beyond. The course is the only in Australia written by an in-house curriculum development team and as such, is able to respond directly to stakeholder and industry demands. The team included streams for critical thinking, digital literacy, collaboration, negotiation, reflecting, academic culture and research skills. These streams are integrated into language lessons as part of the blended learning courses, which incorporate flipped classroom lessons as well as online course material.

The materials are used in RMIT English Worldwide (REW) language centres in Melbourne and overseas. The curriculum content and assessment are regulated by TEQSA. The curriculum content is Australian Qualifications Framework and TESOL technology standards framework compliant as well as supportive of the assessment and responsive to the university's feedback on international student performance and behaviour.

“Edit, proof, polish and post” – Using student writing in lectures to build engagement and literacy.

Tanya Weiler & Paul (Naz) Oldham. University of South Australia.

Getting students to attend and engage in lecture content is often described as problematic for educators, and from discussions with other enabling educators can be viewed as an ongoing battle. As stated by Gibbs (1992), students engage and exhibit deeper levels of understanding when given the opportunity to discuss and participate in the learning process. Making a lecture unmissable through transforming it from a traditional lecture into a writing workshop using student generated content has increased consistency of attendance and engagement. This presentation will explain the ‘edit, proof, polish and post’ process which encourages students to submit their writing to weekly discussion boards for constructive feedback and use as exemplars in these writing workshops. This presentation will demonstrate how lectures have transformed into an opportunity for active learning (Exley & Dennick, 2004), allowing for a greater connection to the content and desire for mastery. Evaluative feedback from students has affirmed that this structured process has enhanced student understanding

of common writing errors, and through highlighting how to improve written expression in a supportive and active workshop environment, students have built confidence in their writing and enhanced their communication skills. As stated by Kolb (1984), when students are encouraged to both act and observe learning works best. Our own experimentation with this method has had overwhelmingly positive results, and sharing this development in teaching practice will allow for further development and adoption of this innovative approach.

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Flipping and blending: Transitioning students from dependent to independent learners.

Annika Westrenius. University of Newcastle.

The move to flipped and blended modes of deliver at undergraduate level requires students to become independent and self-directed learners. A challenge in the flipped approach is the student expectation and level of engagement with the material prior to class. Students conditioned to a dependent style of learning frequently lack insight to become independent learners and do not understand the need to engage in preparation prior to class, instead expecting to be told what they need to know. This lack of preparation undermines the effectiveness of the flipped approach, forcing teaching staff to revert to traditional lecture styles or leave under prepared students behind. This presentation describes an approach to help students to transition from dependent to independent and self-directed learners using a planned change approach. First, change is prepared by identifying the need for change. Adult learners learn in response to a felt need for change and this rational approach creates such awareness and fosters a ‘partnership in learning’ between the academic and students. The change occurs over several weeks where students are encouraged to prepare for class by seeking to identify examples of practices in everyday life that are relevant to theories covered in class. Such examples are then used in-class, where theories and concepts can be applied to deepen analysis and understanding of the event, but also to use the example to understand the theory. Finally, continued adoption is reinforced by intrinsic rewards as students gain value from class activities involving discussions of current events. Students’ contribution of ‘real life’ examples and engagement with theoretical content supports students’ self-concept as capable learners. The approach has received positive feedback from students, particular past students who have moved on to success at undergraduate level. The approach contributes to teaching practice.

Attrition: Is it exaggerated, unavoidable and normal?

Julie Willans. Central Queensland University.

The 2008 Bradley Review of Higher Education strategised an ambitious goal to significantly increase the number of citizens in possession of a higher education qualification by the year 2025. Included in this estimate are those traditionally under-represented in higher education, many denoted as belonging

to specific government targeted equity groups. While the demand-driven Commonwealth funding system has provided more accessibility to a greater diversity of citizens, not all those partaking in higher education or enabling programs are able to or want to persist with their studies. The mantra of recent years and the focus of imminent higher education reforms is the phenomenon of attrition. However, this term can be exaggerated due to misinterpretation and lack of accurate data. Institutionally funded research conducted in 2016-17 with a group of students who attrited from CQUniversity's STEPS course during 2013-15, sought to know more about the reasons for their attrition, the outcome being to enhance student success in STEPS. Findings show that unavoidable attrition will always occur for enabling students. Most students reported having to contend with the demands of paid employment, family and other responsibilities, relationship issues, financial and health issues, low confidence levels, a lack of academic preparedness and challenges associated with the University. Normal attrition occurred for some who determined that they were either not suited to higher education, or for personal or other reasons, were unable to, or chose not to continue. Others withdrew with the intention to re-enrol at another time. Such attrition can be viewed in a positive sense as these students no longer represented a financial cost to the institution, and they relayed that their enhanced skills and confidence levels resulted in new personal opportunities and future decisions. While some reasons for attrition were within institutional control, most were not. It therefore begs a more thorough investigation of the question: Is attrition exaggerated, unavoidable and normal?

Using Indigenous methodologies to understand the experiences of first in the family university students.

'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki. University of Auckland, New Zealand.

This presentation will showcase narratives and visual representations gathered from focus group interviews of Pacific Island and Maori students who are first in their family to study at university (FIFU). First in the family students are those whose parents did not attend higher learning institutions. The current project employed an indigenous and culturally appropriate methodology to examine the experiences of FIFU students in their journey into (recruitment and enrolment) and through (achievement and retention) the university. By privileging indigenous forms of knowledge and ways of being we assert the critical role that culture plays in the success of FIFU and indigenous students. This project builds on the findings of an initial study that highlighted the lack of work on how universities in Aotearoa New Zealand best support the success of FIFU students. The initial study also showed the need to critically examine the role of universities in recruiting, retaining and supporting FIFU students to succeed. Our analysis of students' narratives revealed a number of themes that will be covered in this presentation; the importance of being first, FIFU as role models, the contribution of family and friends to their journey, institutional structure and practices that help and/or hinder their success. This presentation will also offer strategies for engaging with FIFU students who are from indigenous backgrounds.

