

News for Enabling Educators

NAEEA CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Dear Enabling Colleagues,

What a different world we continue to find ourselves working and living in at present. Overnight, COVID-19 changed our lives and transformed the way we live, work, learn and interact with each other. The Higher Education landscape changed overnight and our day to day existence as educators was seriously disrupted. Some of us have lost valued colleagues through voluntary and/or forced measures, campuses have temporarily closed, academic calendars have been modified, travel for work has been restricted, international students are absent from our corridors. All of us have felt the loss of our usual community and Zoom has become our new best friend! While we continue to live in uncertain times, as educators we concentrate our efforts on delivering high quality teaching and support to our Enabling students, mostly in the online environment. We continue to listen to students' needs and concerns and do all in our power to support them through their learning journey. We focus on what is best for our students and provide them with the best opportunity to learn and succeed.

Through this disruption, the NAEEA executive has continued to work collaboratively in the interests of all Enabling educators and students. Of major importance is the recent submission made by NAEEA in response to Minister Dan Tehan's invitation to respond to the Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-Ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill 2020. On behalf of our membership, and in the interests of Enabling Education within Australia, NAEEA requested that Enabling remain within the Commonwealth Grant Scheme higher education courses funding to ensure the positive impact this entry pathway has had nationally, particularly for those from regional Australia who study Enabling online or on a campus. We also requested that the proposed extension of Enabling funding to include non-university providers should be removed, so as to not dilute alignment and quality, and risk reducing the impact of Enabling. All submissions to this Bill are available on the committee's webpage at www.aph.gov.au/senate_eec. I am pleased, as I am sure you are, to see an amendment to the Bill to include enabling loading explicitly in the legislation, under the Commonwealth Grant Scheme Guidelines within the Higher Education Support Act 2003, which is consistent with the current arrangement.

On behalf of the Executive team, I wish you well as we continue to work our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, as you continue to navigate this uncertain world, and as you continue to find yourselves being called on to adapt to the 'new normal'. I hope you and your loved ones stay safe and well.

Many regards

Karen Seary
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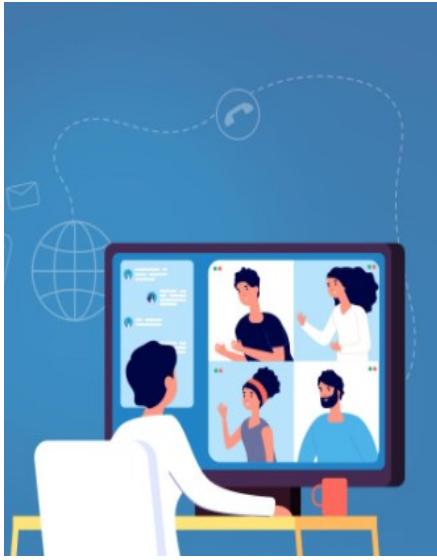
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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Planning for NAEEA 2020 Symposium is well underway
- Find out about new programs and new approaches in Enabling education
- Share the successes of a University of Auckland project
- Share your Enabling education research with your colleagues

‘WHAT’S THE FUTURE OF ENABLING EDUCATION?’ ONLINE SYMPOSIUM



In uncertain times, it is more important than ever to work together to support each other and our students. While travel may be limited, the online world provides a wealth of opportunities to come together, and this year, University of South Australia (UniSA) will host the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) 2-day free On-line Symposium on 10th and 11th December 2020.

This event will provide the space for philosophical, political, sociological or pragmatic explorations of where the sector is heading as we consider the impacts, challenges and opportunities that have been presented this year due to COVID-19 and other political, economic and social shifts in the higher education landscape.

As a sector, we demonstrate great resilience. The symposium will provide opportunities for positive explorations but also an opportunity to re-group and develop some strategies about how we adapt and prepare for future challenges that the sector may face more broadly.

We promise an interactive, engaging and thought-provoking event as well as the opportunity for a collective ‘sigh’ as we come to the end of a tumultuous 2020 that has impacted our sector in a multitude of ways.

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FEAR IS NOTHING WHEN PASSION IS FOSTERED: STUDENT STORIES

The student journey starts long before any application or acceptance letter - it starts with the built-in schemas and assumptions of what university is and what a student is supposed to look like. For many, the decision to even consider tertiary education is preceded by both internal dialogue (“should I do this?”, “can I do this?”) and external factors (“what will people think?”, “can I afford to do this?”). At the end however, it often comes down to simply holding your breath and diving into the deep-end. But, like any first swimming lesson, whether you sink or float can be heavily dependent on how prepared you are and how determined you are. In the tertiary education context, being prepared means having the basic skills to calculate, format, write and absorb higher level information. BUT, at a more personal level, it also means having the confidence to ‘show-up’, the self-efficacy to

believe in your ability, and the emotional strength to get through the tough bits.

As students who have experienced the pre-study uncertainty and anxiety, and then the ‘deep-end splash’, we unitedly believe that preparatory studies have been our collection point for both the practical and personal tools we have needed to become both successful students as well as successful people. Here are our stories.....

KRISTIE-LEE’S STORY

I never had any intention of going to university - higher education was for smart people, not me. So when I graduated grade 12 (2002), I began my hairdressing trade. After years in hairdressing and an extremely rocky start to early adulthood, my self-confidence, passion and interest were non-existent. I started to self-isolate and eventually became a full-time stay-at-home mum.

However, by 2015, I found myself yearning for ‘something extra’. On a family member’s suggestion, in mid-2015 I enrolled in Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) at CQUniversity. Managing my time, showing up to classes, talking to other adults... it was terrifying! Two weeks later I emailed the STEPS Coordinator asking to un-enroll. But the Coordinator saw the potential in me, encouraged me to stay and gave me all the support that I needed.

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Five years on, I have completed my Bachelor of Psychological Science with First Class Honours, I've been awarded for leadership, research excellence and academic success, and I have begun my PhD journey. Without a doubt, if I hadn't received the encouragement and support during STEPS, I would not be the person I am today.

'Preparatory studies founded who I am today.'

TEK'S STORY

My journey began on the 5th of July 2013 when I arrived in Australia on a permanent humanitarian residency visa. Leaving everything behind and moving to Australia was a challenging - yet an exciting Journey. To kickstart my high school studies I had to undertake a six-month Intensive English course at the Warrawong Intensive English Centre. Thereafter, I began my high school studies in January 2014 and completed my High School Certificate (HSC) in September 2016.

My goal prior to moving to Australia was to earn a Higher Education degree at a world class University. But both the ongoing disruptions during my Junior years and English being my third spoken and written language were obstacles towards achieving my goal.

'UOW College Australia has prepared me for transitioning into my Bachelor Degree.'

I knew how to persevere through these challenges when UOW College Australia visited my former high school and offered a Special Tertiary Entrance Program (STEP) – a six month pathway course which provided me with a guaranteed entry into the Bachelor of Commerce at the University of Wollongong (UOW).



Tek Mengistu is now studying a Bachelor of Commerce and working for UoW College helping other students succeed.

I successfully completed the STEP course and graduated in November 2017. The college has equipped me with vital academic skills necessary to succeed which most University students struggle with during their first year. The highly supportive teachers and friendly staff have assisted me throughout my studies. Such Journey has empowered me and enabled me to reach my desired goal whilst rising above all the challenges during that time. Today I am officially an Australian citizen and one year closer to completing my Bachelor of Commerce Degree with a distinction. I am currently employed by the UOW College Australia as a Peer Assisted Learning Sessions (PALS Leader & Marketing Coordinator) and Student Relations Coordinator.

Each of our stories started well before our orientation day - fear and uncertainty hit each one of us. However, the support and tools we gained during our respective preparatory studies stirred something inside us and now our passion to be 'something more' is stronger than any fear.

By Kristie-Lee Alfrey (School of Health, Medical and Applied Science, Research Division, CQUniversity Australia) & Tek Mengistu (Faculty of Business and Law, Management, Operations and Marketing, UOW Australia).



Kristie-Lee Alfrey is undertaking a PhD after beginning university study in tertiary preparation.

FIRST IN FAMILY MULTI MEDIA ONLINE PROJECT: UNIVERSTIY OF AUCKLAND

Dr 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki has teamed up with award-winning filmmaker Professor Annie Goldson on an exciting and timely project to highlight the experiences of first in family students who attended their first year of study at the University of Auckland in 2019.

'Ema's expertise in this area, along with her work with international colleagues saw her successfully apply for funding through the World Universities Network (WUN)

First in family students are more likely to face challenges in their first year of study, are often from lower socio-economic backgrounds, traverse multiple cultures and can experience a sense of alienation at university.

First in Family is an ongoing qualitative study which tells the unique stories of six students as they discuss their challenges and successes. These rich stories highlight incredible resilience as students negotiate domestic responsibilities, work demands, the challenges of not studying in their first languages, geographical challenges and, often, past dislocations.

To view the student stories, see <https://fif.op.co.nz/> For more information about this project, go to <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/news/2020/03/31/annie-goldson-first-in-family-first-year-project.html>

TRANSITION TO UNI—A NEW PATHWAY PROGRAM AT SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

“I just wanted to prove to myself that I can do the work. I’ve surprised myself!” Hayley, current Year 12 student.

The above comment is typical of how students at Southern Cross University feel about a new, fee free, 6-week course that prepares them for uni and guarantees entry to undergraduate study. The course is designed for students currently completing Year 12 with an ATAR and for those who have recently finished Year 12.



Students need to complete two units, one focusing on time and self-management as well as key academic literacy skills, the other on foundation science and maths concepts. They can complete both units in one study period or part-time over two study periods to suit their competing commitments. The course is delivered online with two, two-hour interactive tutorials plus a one hour assessment preparation workshop per week. This study period there were almost 100 students in the academic literacy unit and more than 60 in the science/maths unit.

Anonymous feedback on our university surveys was overwhelmingly positive with students rating the teaching a high 4.90/5. The success rate was also high at 85% for the academic literacy unit and 80% for the scientific and mathematical concepts unit, well above the typical 50-60% success rate for enabling pathway programs.

In conversation with Dr Suzi Syme, Program Coordinator, four students talked about their experiences of the program. Isabel-

la, a current Year 12 student said, “I was kinda scared going to uni. I always knew I was going to go but I was scared of what to expect so it has eased those nerves about going”. All four students commented that the course had provided a solid foundation for their future uni study, helping them to understand the expectations of university study. Hayley had particularly enjoyed learning new skills such as accessing research papers while Isabella and Cassie commented on how the course had taught them how to actually write an academic essay at university.

“I was kinda scared going to uni. I always knew I was going to go but I was scared of what to expect so it has eased those nerves about going”.

They all agreed the course had helped them to see just how capable they are and had far exceeded their expectations. Elizabeth added, “... everyone has been so supportive, it has been really easy to understand the logical progression of the course and the blackboard collaborate is a really good way of learning”.

Overall there was a consensus that the course has given them a solid introduction to university study and more. “It gives you a leg up!” they said. They were enthusiastic about their newfound confidence in themselves and their abilities while for the three current Year 12 students, the course had eased the pressure and stress of completing the HSC.



2019/20 NCSEHE EQUITY FELLOW – NICOLE CRAWFORD

University students' mental wellbeing is increasingly "on the radar" of universities in Australia and internationally. In this climate, I recently undertook a national research project to investigate student-centred, proactive approaches that support the mental wellbeing of university students. This 12-month fellowship was a nationally-competitive award, conducted under the NCSEHE Equity Fellows Program, which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE). Responding to calls for deeper understandings of the diversity and complexity of equity-group cohorts, I focussed on mature-aged students in regional and remote Australia. While my Fellowship topic was informed by national priorities and research, it also stemmed from my daily teaching and learning experiences, over nearly a decade, in the University of Tasmania's Pre-degree Programs.



NCSEHE Equity Fellow Dr Nicole Crawford

is the everyday interactions that students have with teaching and support staff; their peers; the unit/subject content and curriculum; and the physical or online "classroom" that impact their mental wellbeing. These impacts can be positive, negative or—as is often the case—both at the same time. Inclusive practices in teaching and learning, and support are recommended as ways of catering to the needs and strengths of mature-aged students in regional and remote Australia and of proactively supporting and enhancing their mental wellbeing.

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The research report is currently under external review; it will be published on the NCSEHE website later in 2020. I wish to acknowledge and thank colleagues across the country in enabling education, particularly members of the NAEAA Special Interest Group on Mental Health, for the numerous discussions over many years about supporting student and staff mental health and wellbeing.

By Dr Nicole Crawford

More information about Nicole's work can be found on the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) at <https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/2019-20-equity-fellow-nicole-crawford/>

NAEEA WEBINARS

While COVID-19 has limited our travel options, NAEAA members have this year been able to attend a series of online webinars.

The inaugural presentation 'Enabling success for students from disadvantaged backgrounds: online or not', led by Karen Seary (CQUni) and Charmaine Davis (USQ) and current and former Enabling program students examined what success and engagement meant for students in both online and face-to-face study modes.

Presented by Nicole Crawford (NCSEHE), Marguerite Westacott (USC), Helen Scobie (UoN); Angela Jones (Murdoch University) and Juliette Subramaniam (WSU), 'Supporting staff mental wellbeing in Enabling education' focused on how Enabling educators are emotionally invested in students' success, often at the detriment of their own wellbeing.

'Transformative Learning: Agency, independence, sense-of-self in teen mothers' showcased the approach taken by one Enabling program to support young mothers in tertiary study. Janet Turley and Emma Kill from Sunshine Coast University offered insights into the practical implications for educators.

Members of NAEAA and the HERDSA Assessment Quality SIG, including Lynnae Venaruzzo (WSU), Dr James Valentine (CDU), along with a panel of recently graduated students hosted 'Student success through assessment design', exploring effective assessment practices, and the impact of assessment design on student experiences.

'COVID-19: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and teacher experiences', was presented by Hannah Pipe and Dan Collins from UoN.

Please look out for upcoming Webinars. Many thanks to webinar Chairs, particularly Dr Pranita Anand.



SHARE YOUR WORK WITH NAEAA COLLEAGUES

The NAEAA website continues to evolve and includes a resources tab which features published works by Association members. This work is arranged under a number of relevant themes including: Access and Widening Participation, Enabling Pedagogy and Curriculum, Equity and Diversity, Student and Staff Wellbeing, and Transitions. This is an excellent resource for those researching in the field, and a platform for you to share your publications more broadly with your colleagues.

Recent additions include:

Nieuwoudt, J. E. (2020). Investigating synchronous and asynchronous class attendance as predictors of academic success in online education. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 36 (3), 15-25. DOI: [10.14742/ajet.5137](https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.5137)

Searly K, Willans J. (01 Jan 2020) Pastoral care and the caring teacher – value adding to enabling education. *Student Success* 11 (1):12-21. DOI: [10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1456](https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v11i1.1456)

Syme, S., Davis, C., & Cook, C. (2020). Benchmarking Australian enabling programmes: assuring quality, comparability and transparency. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. DOI: [10.1080/02602938.2020.1804825](https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1804825)

If you would like to have your publications included, please contact admin@enablingeducators.org to request a template for providing details to the NAEAA website team.

2 DAY NAEAA SYMPOSIUM SETS FOCUS ON THE FUTURE OF ENABLING EDUCATION (Continued from Page 2)

Across the two-day event from 10th to 11th December, 2020, participants will consider the central question of ‘What is the future of enabling education in Australia?’

In the spirit of Q & A, the symposium will feature four panel sessions. Each will be hosted by experts, friends and champions of equity in higher education.

Chaired by Professor Sally Kift will be the critically important ‘To AQF or not AQF? Constraints and Opportunities for Enabling Programs’.

‘Where to from here? Bracing for impacts of the Job-Ready Graduates Package’ will be chaired by Associate Professor Nadine Zacharias, and will no doubt generate much interest and debate.

Dr Anna Bennett will chair ‘F2F or digital connection: can enabling pedagogy transform the virtual learning experience?’ This panel will provide the opportunity for participants to explore how the excellence demonstrated by Enabling Educators can make significant contributions to improvements in online education across the university sector.

Symposium organisers are seeking expressions of interest from Enabling Educators to join the panel chairs and fill remaining positions on each panel. This means participants have the opportunity to pitch for a place on these three exciting panels. Details about how to apply will be forwarded to members in the very near future.

Final Call: New Springer volume on Widening Participation in Higher Education

Arriving at a time when the Widening Participation sector in Australia is coming of age, this volume, part of the Springer Reference series in University Development and Administration (Series Editor Fernando F. Padró) is an opportunity for NAEAA members to contribute to program development and policy directions that increase the participation of social equity groups in Higher Education. The volume, which will be published late in 2020, targets readers who have an interest in establishing pro-

grams at their institutions that foster widening participation and aims to draw from current best practice and innovations in the sector.

During the Symposium, participants will also hear from students in enabling programs with a panel session titled ‘The hidden benefits of enabling education: a letter to our Prime Minister’. This exciting and no doubt provocative student panel will be hosted by Alumni Enabling Student Matthew Bowden.

Be involved in debate, discussion and presentations.

All members of the Symposium’s live audience can post questions in advance for panels to discuss, debate and offer insight on how Enabling educators can navigate the political, economic and social realms impacting higher education.

Also as part of this symposium, Enabling educators and practitioners are encouraged to record a 3-minute thesis style video sharing teaching tips, tricks, hacks and revelations learnt this year due to COVID. This will be instead of a regular ‘live’ conference style presentation. The videos will be shared across the 2-day symposium with the ability for audience members to comment and contact presenters with any questions they have.

Registration details and how you can get involved will be sent out to NAEAA members very soon!

While we already have had many solid contributions, there is still scope for a few more chapters. Expressions of interest are invited from those who wish to contribute. Contact Jonathan Green (Jonathan.Green@usq.edu.au).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN THE PREPARING FOR SUCCESS PROGRAM AT SOUTHERN CROSS UNI



For enabling students, academic integrity can present a daunting array of principles and practices. For students who are new to higher education, and particularly those from recognised equity groups such as first-in-family and low socioeconomic status, academic integrity can be especially unfamiliar and intimidating (Picard et al., 2018).

In recognition of these challenges, staff teaching in the Preparing for Success Program at Southern Cross University have renewed the curriculum to better teach and support integrity among enabling students. Our approach is educative rather than punitive, and founded on the underlying principles of respect, honesty, fairness, trust and responsibility (Universities Australia, 2017). The central change was the introduction of an assessed multiple-choice quiz in the early weeks of a core academic writing unit. The quiz assists students to focus specifically on the why, what and how of integrity and referencing before attempting written assessment tasks, which include an essay plan and a critical essay.

The quiz and associated in-class activities have resulted in notable improvements to integrity in the writing unit. In the session before the quiz was introduced, 3.6% of submissions underwent academic integrity procedures. After the quiz was introduced, this fell to an average of 1.4% per session, or just 30 cases among more than 2,000 assessment submissions.

These improvements have prompted an ongoing research project focused on enabling students' perceptions of academic integrity. The research builds on the educative approach to integrity that has been increasingly embraced in Australian higher education over the past decade (Bretag et al., 2011, 2014; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017; Universities Australia, 2017). It is hoped that the results will become available in 2021, further advancing understanding of the enabling student perspective on the vital practice of academic integrity.

“Our approach is educative rather than punitive, and founded on the underlying principles of respect, honesty, fairness, trust and responsibility.”

By Dr Liz Goode, Teaching Scholar, Southern Cross University.

NAEEA MEMBERSHIP 2020

Membership of NAEEA is due. However, the Association recognises this year has presented great challenges for many of its members. Please contact admin@enablingeducators.org if you have questions about your membership.



ABOUT NAEEA

The National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia represents enabling educators and practitioners from across the country for the purpose of collaborating on issues of common interest and relevance to enable education and the students whose lives are changed through access to tertiary education.

For more information about the Association, contact admin@enablingeducators.org or visit our website at <https://enablingeducators.org/>

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