

NAEEA

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
ENABLING EDUCATORS
OF AUSTRALIA**

**Reimagining Enabling
in Higher Education**

December 5 - 6 | Adelaide | #naeea2022

HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Welcome

The National Association of Enabling Educators Australia and the University of South Australia welcome you to our 5th biennial NAEAA Conference. We are thrilled to welcome you 'in person' to the University of South Australia's City West campus. We acknowledge the excitement an 'in-person' conference experience has engendered and know this opportunity to network face-to-face with Enabling education colleagues from across the Australian higher education sector will be most appreciated. It has been some time since we were able to come together to meet, network, share our practice, challenges and successes, We welcome those long-term attendees back to conference and most importantly, we welcome any first time attendees. The conference theme, 'Reimagining Enabling in Higher Education' will provide rich opportunity for Interaction, collaboration and networking. We hope you enjoy your conference experience, as together, we explore the future of Enabling Education in Higher Education.

Karen Seary

Chair of NAEAA Executive

On behalf of the NAEEA Conference Hub Group, welcome to our gorgeous city and our campus in the West end of Adelaide!

We are very excited you have made the journey to be with us face-to-face and come together to celebrate our work in enabling education. When we were coming up with a theme for the conference, we chose to focus on what is possible or hopeful for enabling education in higher education institutions. There is evidence across Australia that enabling educators have taken their role seriously to contribute to a widening participation agenda. Enabling pedagogies are becoming increasingly recognised as best practice teaching approaches in higher education.

For the first time in NAEEA history, we have a number of educators at our conference who teach outside of enabling education showcasing how enacting enabling pedagogies in their teaching in undergraduate or even postgraduate programs produced strong student outcomes. The future of enabling education relies on a university-wide support for widening participation and the adoption of inclusive pedagogies beyond enabling is vital so students continue to receive the support and recognition of their capabilities to succeed.

We are also delighted to welcome enabling alumni from across Australia who elected to go into a degree or career in education, and are willing to share with us how coming through an enabling program has shaped them as an educator and their own commitment to addressing educational disadvantage. The impact of our work is wide-reaching, powerful and should be celebrated.

We are thrilled to have tempted our keynote speakers to share their passion and expertise of enabling education or equity in higher education and we very much look forward to their presentations and panels. A special thank you to Greens Senator Barbara Pocock, also Emeritus Professor of UniSA, for joining our conference and supporting our sector that has been politically vulnerable over the last few years.

Thank you to our local conference organising committee for your help with the planning and execution of the conference and we are grateful to Jason Thomas for his expertise in guiding our Hub along.

We hope you enjoy the next two days and we look forward to the discussions, insights and merriment!

On behalf of the NAEEA Conference Hub

Sarah Hattam & Anthea Fudge

NAEEA Executive Committee Members of SA

NAEEA Conference Hub Members

Tanya Weiler
Snjezana Bilic
Alice Betteridge
Min Pham
Natasha Wilson
Catherine Madigan

Student Volunteers

Jennifer Lawther
Dayna-Marie Teresa Green Gaston

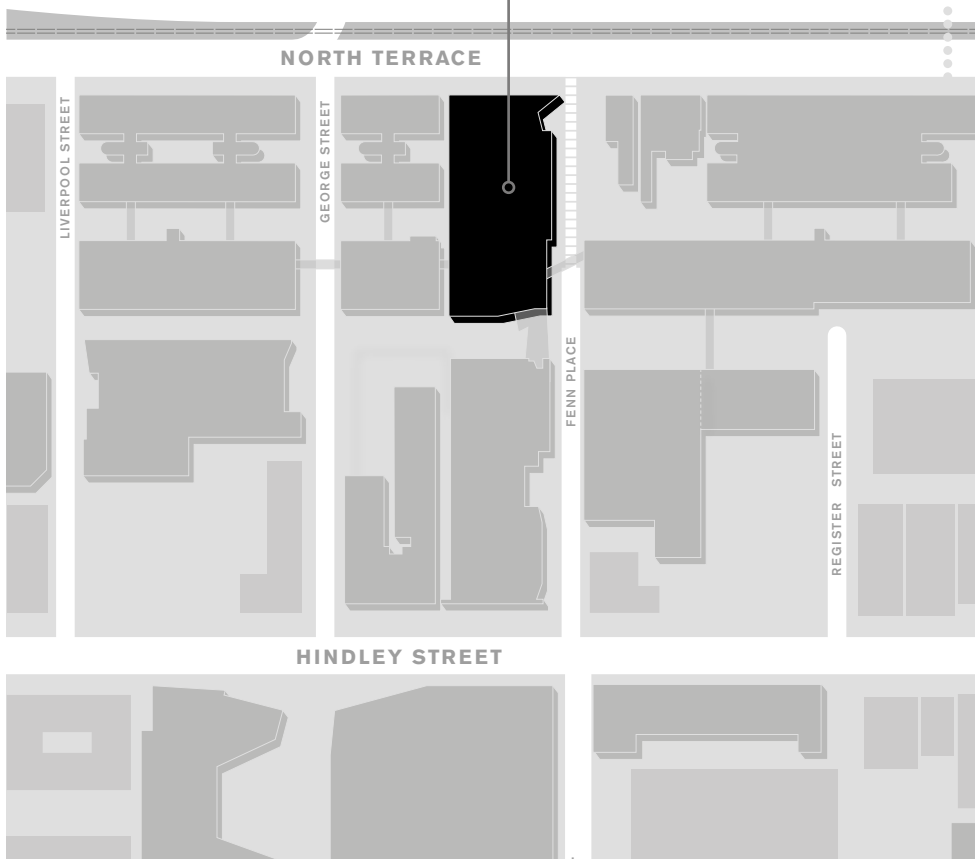
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VENUE MAP

NAEEA 2022

The Bradley Forum
Level 5
Hawke Building
50 - 55 North Terrace
Adelaide SA



FULL PROGRAM

MONDAY 5 DECEMBER 2022

from 8:00am **Registration and Coffee on arrival**

ROOM **Bradley Forum, Level 5, Hawke Building**

8:45am - 9:10am **Welcome to Country & Conference Opening**

Welcome from Dean of Programs UniSA College Professor Sharron King
Welcome from Vice Chancellor and President University of South Australia
Professor David Lloyd
Welcome from NAEAA Chair Karen Seary

9:10am - 10:00am **Keynote Presentation**

"Raising aspiration": A reflection on two decades of widening
participation policy and practice
Professor Sam Sellar

10:00am - 10:30am MORNING TEA

ROOM	H6-09	H6-10	H611	H6-12
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THEME	Advancing Digital Approaches	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	New Perspectives
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Parallel Session 1	1A	1B	1C	1D
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10:30am - 11:00am	That's cool, but is it practical? Using virtual reality in physics Enabling education for online learners <i>Gemma Mann, Malcolm Burt</i> <i>CQ University</i>	Let them speak! Enabling assessments for student success <i>Amita Krautloher, Pranit Anand, Liz Goode, James Valentine</i> <i>Charles Sturt University</i>	Teaching students from refugee backgrounds in the classroom and online: Investigating culturally responsive pedagogies and tailored learning resources and technologies <i>Heidi Hetz, Snjezana Bilic</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	The impact of significant outside work on the success and retention of students from educationally-disadvantaged backgrounds <i>Heath Jones</i> <i>University of Newcastle</i>
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Parallel Session 2	2A	2B	2C	2D
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11:00am-11:30am	Opening opportunities for online learners with low-cost labs <i>Natasha Wilson, Anthea Fudge, Alice Betteridge</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Value-added learning for student success in a 6-week immersive delivery model <i>Suzi Syme, Liz Goode, Johanna Nieuwoudt</i> <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Grit-ability: An Embedded Support Model in Enabling Education. <i>Anne Braund, Trixie James, Katrina Johnston</i> <i>CQ University</i>	Examining discourse and identity in Enabling education: The emergence of a discipline <i>Charmaine Davis, Jonathan Green</i> <i>University of Southern Queensland</i>
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Parallel Session 3	3A	3B	3C	3D
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11:30am - 12:00pm	Innovating academic advising: Student experiences of online academic advising to support their transition into university <i>Orie Green, Russell Crank, Mary McGovern</i> <i>University of Southern Queensland</i>	PEER pedagogy: Toward whole person learning in enabling education <i>Min Pham, Jennifer Lawther, Dayna Green-Gaston, Parveen Parveen</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Reasons for saying 'I Do!': Students' completion of formative feedback tasks in an enabling unit <i>Katrina Johnston, Hermina Conradie, Peppa Piacun, Christina Maurer-Smolter, Michelle Gray</i> <i>CQ University</i>	What's the Problem Represented to Be? The Job Ready Graduates Package: Navigating widening participation in a zero tolerance environment <i>Kate Sheppard</i> <i>James Cook University</i>
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ROOM	Bradley Forum			
12:00pm - 12:30pm	National Benchmarking Presentation			
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch			
ROOM	H6-09	H6-10	H611	H6-12
THEME	Agency & Avenues	Empowering Voices	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	Action research
Parallel Session 4	4A	4B	4C	4D
1:30pm - 2:00pm	<p>Enabling Educators in a Covid Context: Pressure for Practitioners and Avenues for Agency and Change</p> <p><i>Anita Olds, Susan Hopkins, Joanne Lisciandro, Angela Jones, Juliette Subramaniam, Marguerite Westacott, Ana Larsen, Rebekah Sturniolo-Baker, Helen Scobie</i></p> <p><i>Murdoch University</i></p>	<p>Transferable skills: Enabling students' success in Undergraduate STEM courses.</p> <p><i>Catherine Burgess</i></p> <p><i>University of Newcastle</i></p>	<p>Creative Enabling: multimodal assessment for engagement with the academy</p> <p><i>Jane Habner, Kung-Keat Teoh</i></p> <p><i>Flinders University</i></p>	<p>The Be Positive Program: Helping students be more resilient in their learning and life journey</p> <p><i>Trixie James, Katrina Johnston, Ruth O'Neill, Sara Hof</i></p> <p><i>CQ University</i></p>
Parallel Session 5	5A	5B	5C	5D
2:00pm - 2:30pm	<p>Passing the second time around: An investigation into students who successfully repeat</p> <p><i>Victoria Fielding, Tanya Weiler</i></p> <p><i>University of Adelaide</i></p>	<p>Teachers as learners: Indigenising curriculum for enabling students</p> <p><i>Rory Jeffs, Lisa Amerikanos</i></p> <p><i>University of Tasmania</i></p>	<p>Clicking: A constructivist grounded theory for the process of learning mathematics in a university enabling course</p> <p><i>Gemma Mann</i></p> <p><i>CQ University</i></p>	<p>Do I belong and am I worthy enough? An investigation into perceptions of self-efficacy, capability and sense of belonging of students in an enabling STEM-based nursing course.</p> <p><i>Zoe Griffiths, Michelle Mansfield, Emily Rowley</i></p> <p><i>University of Newcastle</i></p>
Parallel Session 6	6A	6B	6C	6D
2:30pm - 3:00pm	<p>How does Social Innovation play a role in higher education's equity agenda?</p> <p><i>Trixie James, Anne Braund, Ana Larsen, Herna Conradie, Leonie Keating, Michelle Gray</i></p> <p><i>CQ University</i></p>	<p>What Matters: responsive approaches to programs, course design and pedagogy.</p> <p><i>Anna Bennett, Kristen Allen</i></p> <p><i>University of Newcastle</i></p>	<p>Don't smile until Easter! How about a giggle?</p> <p><i>Andrew Higgins</i></p> <p><i>James Cook University</i></p>	<p>Democratic Pedagogies in Initial Teacher Education: Co-constructing a Supportive Learning Framework</p> <p><i>Susan Raymond, Shaan Gilson</i></p> <p><i>University of South Australia</i></p>
3:00pm - 3:30pm	<p>Afternoon Tea</p> <p>Poster Presentation Showcase</p>			

ROOM		Bradley Forum	
3:30pm - 4:30pm	Student Voice Panel	Session Host:	Jennifer Lawther
		Panel Members:	Joshua Bradbrook UniSA College Alumni
			Tara Ogilvie Central Queensland University Alumni
			Holly Millican Southern Cross University Alumni
4:30pm - 5:00pm	Keynote Presentation	What does an enabling work and care system for Australia look like?	
		Senator Barbara Pocock Greens Senator for South Australia	
From 5:30pm	Conference Soiree		

TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2022

from 8:00am **Registration and Coffee on arrival**

ROOM		Bradley Forum	
8:50am - 9:00am	Day 2 Welcome	Welcome from lead of Conference committee Sarah Hattam	
9:00am - 10:00am	Keynote Presentation	"On or under the radar?" Supporting student and staff mental wellbeing Dr Nicole Crawford	
10:00am - 10:30am	Morning Tea Sponsored by Cengage 		

ROOM	H6-09	H6-10	H611	H6-12
THEME	Advancing Digital Approaches	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	Action Research
Parallel Session 7	7A	7B	7C	7D
10:30am - 11:00am	Using Innovative Technology for the Creation of a Mobile Application to Present Study Material in a Computing Unit": Or as I like to call it My Textbook App Katrina Johnston CQ University	Curating a Course: An autoethnographic approach to curriculum design Paul Chojenta University of Newcastle	Enabling Academic Integrity through embedded curriculum, pedagogy and an educative approach Michael Brickhill Southern Cross University	Discovering simple course redesign tactics to improve student engagement with content, peers, and teaching staff in online human services courses Paula Rowe University of South Australia

Parallel Session 8		08A	08B	08C	08D
11:00am - 11:30am	Enhancing dialogue in the Open University Australia online course 'Tertiary Learning Strategies' through smart pencil technology: educators and learners' perspectives <i>Marie Abi Abdallah, Thuy Hoang</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Academic literacy in enabling education programs: A common teaching approach? <i>Charmaine Davis, Kathryn Lawson, Lisa Duffy</i> <i>University of Southern Queensland</i>	Cultural Safety: Embedding equity in to enabling practice and pedagogy <i>Elissa Elvidge, Dan Collins, Jo Hanley</i> <i>University of Newcastle</i>	Co-designing supports to encourage student engagement with course readings <i>Cate Hudson</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	
Parallel Session 9		09A	09B	09C	09D
11:30am - 12:00pm	Is there anybody out there? Educator perception of student engagement in the Zoomosphere <i>Gabriela Toth, Melissa Tomlins, Trixie James, Kerry Bond, Brijesh Kumar</i> <i>CQ University</i>	Post-pandemic subjectivity and enabling pedagogy: Using action research to reimagine curriculum design as a socio-technical assemblage <i>Lisa Moody, Rhian Morgan</i> <i>James Cook University</i>	Authentic assessment, digital learning, and enabling pedagogy <i>Jennifer Stokes, John Pike</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Belonging in the Law Classroom: Enacting dialogic pedagogy and funds of knowledge approaches to promote student belonging and confidence first year law <i>Sarah Moulds</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	

ROOM Bradley Forum

12:00pm - 12:30pm **UniSA Aboriginal Pathway Program Panel Presentation**

12:30pm - 1:30pm Lunch

12:45pm - 1:20pm **Special Interest Group Catch Up**

ROOM	BH4-29	H6-10	H6-11	H6-12	BH4-22	Plenary Room	H6-03	H6-09
	Research Development and Collaboration	Enabling Assessment	Enabling Curriculum	Mental Health	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse students Bradley Forum	Online Learning	Indigenous Students

ROOM Bradley Forum

1:30pm - 2:00pm **Access: Critical explorations of equity in higher education journal session**
Presentation on Zoom

ROOM	H6-09	H6-10	H6-12	H6-12	H6-12
THEME	Agency & Avenues	Empowering Voices	Enabling Practice & Pedagogy	Action Research	New Perspectives
Parallel Session 10	10A	10B	10C	10D	10E
2:00pm - 2:30pm	Enabling LGBTQI+ inclusion: small changes, big impact <i>Gemma Mann</i> <i>CQUniversity</i>	"Your next biggest challenge could be around the corner" - the importance of professional development for Educator wellbeing <i>Tanya Weiler, Sarah Hattam</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Principles for assessment in enabling education: A scoping review <i>Elizabeth Goode, Pranit Anand, James Valentine, Amita Krautloher</i> <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Enabling the Unpacking and Re-Packing of Transcultural Schoolbags through an Immersive Placement Experience <i>Martyn Mills-Bayne, Susie Raymond, Rebekah Hudson</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Missed your ATAR?: What university study means to young adults and why they persevere with the education system. <i>Peter Power, Meg Vertigan</i> <i>University of Newcastle</i>
Parallel Session 11	11A	11B	11C	11D	11E
2:30pm - 3:00pm	Leading from the margins : Advocating for enabling practitioners' role in improving higher education <i>Russell Crank</i> <i>University of Southern Queensland</i>	Shame and Blame: the impact of traditional / non-traditional discourses on students' progression <i>Kristen Allen</i> <i>The University of Newcastle</i>	From base to campus: the role of enabling pedagogy to foster veteran engagement with higher learning <i>Matthew Norris, Lauren Butterworth, Jane Habner, Kung-Keat Teoh</i> <i>Flinders University</i>	'I hear you': using 'rainy day' student queries and errors to improve the languages of instruction <i>Paul (Nazz) Oldham</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	Visualising Enabling curriculum OR how to (also) teach critical pedagogy when primarily asked to teach mechanics of academic writing <i>Dino Murtic</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>
Parallel Session 12	12A	12B	12C	12D	
3:00pm - 3:30pm	Study Preparation, Job Ready Graduates' funding and the value of embedded support <i>Suzi Syme, Stuart Levy, George Lambrinidis</i> <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Where do they come from? Why are they here? Narrative discourse on access to enabling programs. <i>Trixie James</i> <i>CQ University</i>	Life-ready' pathways through Enabling education <i>Bronwyn Relf, Jennifer Irwin, Catherine Burgess</i> <i>University of Newcastle</i>	The Regional Student Experience and School-University Partnerships: a critical inquiry into the impact of enacting care-full pedagogies <i>Sharron Jones</i> <i>University of South Australia</i>	
3:30pm - 4:00pm	Afternoon Tea				

ROOM **Bradley Forum**

4:00pm - 5:00pm **Heads and Friends of Enabling Panel**

Session Chair: Conjoint Associate Professor Cathy Stone
University of Newcastle

Panel Members: Associate Professor Anna Bennett
*Director Pathways and Academic Learning Support
Centre, University of Newcastle*

Professor Sharron King
*Dean of Programs, UniSA College,
University of South Australia*

Professor Karen Nelson
Provost, UniSQ

Professor Thomas Roche
*Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality)
& Dean SCU College, Southern Cross University*

President NAEEA, Karen Seary
*Associate Dean, School of Access Education
Central Queensland University*

5:00pm Conference Close

MONDAY

KEYNOTE SESSION

**Professor Sam Sellar**

*Dean of Research, Education Futures
University of South Australia*

“Raising aspiration”: A reflection on two decades of widening participation policy and practice

Policy agendas to raise aspirations for university study among students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds have a long history. From the working class ‘poverty of desire’ thesis propounded by British socialists at the turn of the twentieth century to concerns about the educational aspirations of low SES groups at the turn of the twenty-first century, the politics of aspiration has long shaped discussions about education and social mobility. Recent aspiration-raising agendas in English and Australian higher education have aimed to realise equity objectives by cultivating dispositions to maximise self-investment in human capital. However, changes in contemporary global education and labour markets present significant obstacles to the ‘good life’ promises made by advocates of human capital theory, and even when these promises are realised, deficit constructions of aspirations persist. In this talk, Sam will reflect on a decade of research into widening participation policies that target aspirations, highlighting the tensions and setting out a framework for building the capacity to aspire.

Biography

Sam Sellar is Dean of Research (Education Futures) and Professor of Education Policy at the University of South Australia. Sam’s research focuses on education policy, large-scale assessments and the datafication of education. He began his academic career in the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education pursuing a research program focused on aspiration raising policies. He is currently co-investigator for an ESRC project investigating digital platforms in higher education (led by Janja Komljenovic, Lancaster University). Sam has published more than 70 books, book chapters and journal articles, and he is Lead Editor of *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. His forthcoming book is *Algorithms of Education: How datafication and artificial intelligence shape policy*, co-authored with Kalervo N. Gulson and P. Taylor Webb.

SESSION 01A

That's cool, but is it practical? Using virtual reality in physics Enabling Education for online learners

Dr Gemma Mann, Dr Malcolm Burt

School of Access Education, Learning Design and Innovation Directorate, CQUniversity Australia

Assessments play a very important role in student learning and act as an important motivator for learning (Boud, 2007; Murphy, 2017). Negative experiences with assessments can sometimes be detrimental for students' aspirations and confidence to continue with their studies (Bearman et al., 2017). This is particularly so for commencing students as well as enabling and pathway students, who may enter these programs with low self-efficacy (Lisciandro et al., 2018; Krautloher, 2021). Unfortunately, many mainstream higher education assessments tend not to accommodate the unique needs of this cohort due to legacy practices and inflexible approaches.

While there are many examples of Enabling assessments from across the enabling and pathways programs in Australia, this presentation will showcase an alternative assessment approach to an invigilated examination for pathway students.

Interactive Oral Assessment (IOA) is an authentic assessment approach where students can demonstrate their knowledge verbally (Sotiriadou et al., 2020). It is a genuine and unscripted conversation between an assessor/s and the student/s around an authentic workplace scenario (Sotiriadou et al., 2020) and provides an alternative to written examinations.

Although this assessment approach can be used as a formative or summative assessment, for the purposes of this presentation the focus is on examinations as it creates the highest amount of stress (Hasanbasic et al., 2019; Kumari & Jain, 2014) for pathway students. High anxiety and psychological distress has in turn been linked with poorer academic outcomes (Nieuwoudt, 2021). In this presentation, the outcomes of a mixed methods research project will be showcased to demonstrate how IOAs, apart from other benefits, are less stressful for students as compared to other types of assessments and improve outcomes for students.

SESSION 01B

Let them speak! Enabling assessments for student success

Ms Amita Krautloher

Division of Learning and Teaching, Charles Sturt University

Dr Pranit Anand

UNSW Business School, University of New South Wales

Dr Elizabeth Goode

Academic Portfolio Office, Southern Cross University

Dr James Valentine

Tertiary Enabling Program, Charles Darwin University

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SESSION 01C

Teaching students from refugee backgrounds in the classroom and online: Investigating culturally responsive pedagogies and tailored learning resources and technologies

Dr Snjezana Bilic, Dr Heidi Hetz

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

Enabling pathway programs are a key aspect for widening participation in higher education in Australia as they provide opportunity to those students from historically under-represented groups to access tertiary education. The student cohort entering university via enabling programs display "extreme heterogeneity" (Hodges et al., 2013, p. 31), including a high proportion of students from equity groups and those who are first-in-family at university, with limited experience or knowledge of higher education. One historically under-represented group are students from refugee-backgrounds (SfRBs). There is a critical need to develop programs and strategies to support SfRBs to participate meaningfully and achieve meaningful success in their studies. A 'one-size-fits-all' generic model of academic support is inadequate as it does not meet the specific and unique needs of such students (Sidhu & Naidoo, 2018).

This paper reports on a project in the enabling pathway programs at UniSA College that aims to develop best practice approaches for teaching and supporting students from refugee backgrounds in higher education. We conducted in-depth interviews with Students from Refugee Backgrounds (SfRBs) as well as focus groups with teaching academics, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) session leaders, and peer support officers from the Refugee Support Group to explore current teaching approaches and the effectiveness of current support services for SfRBs. In this paper, we share early findings about best practice approaches for (1) culturally responsive pedagogies and support services built on in-depth understanding of the educational aspirations, strengths, and challenges of SfRBs and (2) tailored learning resources and technologies supported by effective pedagogies for SfRBs engaged in blended and online learning. We argue that a focus on culturally responsive pedagogies and best practice approaches for online and blended learning can improve the student engagement and will develop a sustainable model of teaching and support SfRBs in enabling programs and beyond.

SESSION 01D

The impact of significant outside work on the success and retention of students from educationally-disadvantaged backgrounds

Dr Heath Jones

Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre, University of Newcastle

The increasing prevalence of outside paid work has long been recognised as a major impact on student capacity for learning. Students from low SES backgrounds are especially vulnerable, with higher levels of workplace participation established during the secondary school years and creating educational disadvantage even before university study has begun.

With the resumption of on-campus university teaching following Covid-19 lockdowns, full-time student participation in paid work is at unprecedented high levels, driven by prevailing economic conditions (job availability, rising cost-of-living pressures) and the Covid-induced growth in online learning possibilities. The pressure of outside work adversely impacts university learning and retention in two chief ways: (1) the direct effect of students unable to commit sufficient hours to pass courses, and (2) the indirect effect of prior workplace participation on poor secondary schooling outcomes for those same students.

Here we review and synthesise research around the employment participation of young Australians from backgrounds of educational disadvantage as they transition to university. We frame these against the main economic employment indicators over the same period and use this to argue that Australian universities face a major reckoning with the impact of student employment participation in the current post-lockdown era. We argue that universities need to be more proactive in addressing the impact of paid work on study and around managing student expectations of workload at this time.

Enabling educators have a special role to play in these efforts, given the ways in which of outside work can confer educational disadvantage from an early age. While the prevailing economic conditions may be transitory, student expectations around work and study will have longer-lasting consequences for student success and retention. Remedies and strategies are reviewed and discussed in the context of enabling education.

SESSION 02A

Opening opportunities for online learners with low-cost labs

Dr Natasha Wilson, Dr Anthea Fudge, Dr Alice Betterridgen

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia.

Students who choose to study online are more likely to be mature-age, first-in-family, from low SES backgrounds, regional/remote areas, and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (Stone & O'Shea, 2019). Without online offerings these students can lack opportunities for tertiary study, outlining the importance of online delivery within enabling programs to support students from a range of equity groups.

To increase the accessibility of our introductory science courses, we have re-imagined our approach to teaching and learning. Traditionally, science courses have involved in-person learning, where practice-based laboratory skills offer a link between theory and conceptual understanding. As a teaching team that recognises the value of lab-based learning opportunities, we wanted to simulate practical learning in the online environment.

The aim of this project was to develop online interactive resources within the context of enabling education. Key considerations that informed our approach were that it needed to be low-cost to implement, provide appropriate scaffolding and offer students timely formative feedback that enabled them to practice these skills in an environment where it was safe to make mistakes.

To support our online cohort, we have adopted a number of digital technologies to provide opportunities for self-regulated learning. In particular, we have used H5P to implement a series of online practical exercises and simulations. This tool was chosen because H5P is an easy-to-use tool and supports active learning strategies in a way that simultaneously segments content and enables opportunities for students to check their comprehension (Wilkie et al., 2018). The presentation will showcase our research drawing on learning analytics along with student and self-reflection to evaluate the effectiveness of the online laboratories and simulations for engagement and support of online students.

REFERENCES

- Stone, C., & O'Shea, S. (2019). Older, online and first: Recommendations for retention and success. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 35(1), 57-69. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.3913>
- Wilkie, S., Zakaria, G., McDonald, T., & Borland, R. (2018). Considerations for designing H5P online interactive activities. *Open Oceans: Learning without borders. Proceedings ASCILITE*, 543-549.

SESSION 02B

Value-added learning for student success in a 6-week immersive delivery model

Dr Liz Goode

Academic Portfolio Office, Southern Cross University

Associate Professor Suzi Syme

SCU College, Southern Cross University

Dr Johanna Nieuwoudt

SCU College, Southern Cross University

This study investigated the impact of a 6-week immersive delivery model underpinned by active learning pedagogy on student success in an enabling program. The aims of the research were to explore: How has a 6-week model affected the academic performance of students in an enabling program? What attributes of the 6-week model do students value, and what impacts do these attributes have on students' learning?

The study compared students' final grades (N = 6,613) across two years of the enabling program's delivery: one year in the traditional 13-week model, and one year in the immersive 6-week model. Focus groups were conducted to explore students' learning experiences in the immersive model.

The key finding from this research is that success rates improved by 19.3% in the immersive model, which was found to be a highly statistically significant change. Significant increases were also observed for a range of sub-groups across study mode (internal/external), load (full-time/part-time), gender (female/male), and age, indicating that the model was a positive innovation for a wide range of students.

The focus group data indicated that students valued the manageable study load of the 6-week format, supported by fewer concurrent learning tasks and the considered scaffolding of assessments. The converged, media-rich, and constructively-aligned curriculum, with opportunities for respectful and dialogic class interactions, were also highly valued by participants. These key attributes enhanced students' focus, and helped them to develop confidence, independence, and critical thinking skills. The findings reported here demonstrate that when a 6-week model is applied in line with good practice principles, it can raise academic achievement among diverse cohorts in an enabling program, and add value to their learning experience.

SESSION 02C

Grit-ability: An embedded support model in Enabling Education.

Anne Braund, Trixie James, Katrina Johnston

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Research acknowledges that enabling programs are delivered in uniquely designed, supportive environments with high proportions of non-traditional students. However, the strategies for creating environments that effectively meet the breadth of “personal, social and academic needs of students is a complex yet under-researched matter in higher education” (Seary & Willans, 2020, p. 12). This gap has led the authors to create the Grit-ability model: An embedded support framework for enabling educators, developed from the concept of Grit (Duckworth, 2007). Research shows that widening participation in higher education requires “more than merely extending entry to non-traditional cohorts” but that structured supports are needed to meet the “transition needs of an increasingly diverse student body” (Larsen, et.al., 2020, p. 14). The Grit-ability model has three distinct layers: internal traits, external networks, and student outcomes. The foundation for this model, draws from the responses from 363 students enrolled in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) enabling program at CQUniversity, Australia. This three-layered framework validates existing literature, showing that positive student mindsets, coupled with strong support relationships leads to success within a university environment (Larsen & James, 2022; Verbree et.al., 2021). The Grit-ability model; however, identifies the specific internal traits and support networks that empowered these enabling students to achieve success. This model is of benefit to enabling educators, proposing that consciously embedding these features into course content and pedagogical practice can support students to achieve positive Grit-ability outcomes.

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SESSION 02D

Examining discourse and identity in Enabling Education: The emergence of a discipline

Ms Charmaine Davis, Associate Professor Jonathan Green.

University of Southern Queensland

Enabling Education in Australia has experienced rapid growth in recent years. While research by enabling education practitioners began to appear in the mid-1990’s, the last ten years has seen sustained growth in the volume of publications that focus specifically on this sub-sector of higher education. Such a shared body of specialist research is one of the hallmarks of an academic discipline, and while this remains a contested term, there is broad agreement that the shared understanding and practices of an emerging disciplinary field will be reflected in both developing professional identity and in common theoretical and practical approaches. Shared professional identity and common approaches will be reflected, in turn, in the emergence of a distinct discourse in the field. Through sociocultural discourse analysis (SCDA), we will explore the extent to which the growing body of Enabling Education publications since 1994 reflects the emergence of a distinct disciplinary field. In so doing, we will investigate how language is used through shared intellectual activity to convey ideas, reach agreement and solve problems that are central to Enabling Education. Consistent with SCDA approaches, we will combine methods of corpus linguistics—whereby large volumes of text are analysed through concordance software for patterns and changes over time—with more qualitative methods focusing on close analysis of selected texts—which are analysed with attention to their cultural contexts. Adopting this approach to the analysis of the body of literature that can be attributed to researchers in the Enabling field will reveal the extent to which this literature reflects the emergence of an Enabling Education professional and academic discipline.

SESSION 03A

Innovating academic advising: Student experiences of online academic advising to support their transition into university

Ms Orië Green

UniSQ College University of Southern Queensland

Mr Russell Crank

Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts, University of Southern Queensland

Ms Mary McGovern

UniSQ College, University of Southern Queensland

This presentation reports on a study of student experiences of an innovative online academic advising approach, called The Zone, which was developed for pathway students enrolled in a regional Australian university. Up to fifty per cent of students enrolling in pathway programs are non-traditional students (Davis & Green, 2020). Non-traditional students enter pathway programs with diverse experiences and can have numerous competing life demands, complex histories with formal education, and/or lengthy absences from academic study. As such, these students can benefit from guidance and support in making the necessary academic, cultural, and organisational adjustments to successfully engage with their studies and transition into university environments. Academic advising, as a source of guidance and support, can play a pivotal role in these students' transitions into university. However, pathway students studying remotely or online can be denied access to the traditional face-to-face modes of academic advising. The Zone was developed to provide equitable, effective, and accessible academic advising for all pathway students. Therefore, online delivery was a crucial strength of the project. The study used a mixed methods approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data from 199 students' experiences using The Zone. The study's overall finding was that students generally considered this online academic advising approach to be beneficial in supporting their transitions to higher education. The data indicates three specific areas in which the students found The Zone to be particularly useful in: the enrolment process, connecting with university staff, and obtaining relevant information promptly. Thus, by facilitating academic advising for students, The Zone assisted students studying online with making necessary adjustments for engaging with their university studies, enhancing their sense of belonging, connecting with staff and peers, and developing student agency. The presentation reports on this academic advising approach and the student responses from the study, providing an opportunity to discuss the potential for adapting this approach of online academic advising.

SESSION 03B

PEER pedagogy: Toward whole person learning in enabling education

Dr Min Pham, Ms Jennifer Lawther, Ms Dayna Green-Gaston, Ms Parveen Parvenu

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

The powerful influence of peers in higher education has been widely documented (Keup, 2012) and is a key reason for many institutions in Australia and around the world to establish Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS). PASS is an academic assistance program in which senior high-achieving students are employed as PASS leaders to facilitate peer-to-peer learning sessions. The impacts of PASS have been well validated in numerous empirical studies over the last four decades with these impacts comprising not only academic achievement (e.g., higher mean grades, lower failure and withdrawal rates, and higher retention and graduation rates) but also personal development (e.g., social relationship, general satisfaction, and well-being) (Dawson et al., 2014; Tai et al., 2016). In addition to investigating significant impacts of PASS, academics and scholars also explore what factors have contributed to those impacts (Bear & Jones, 2017; Hoiland et al., 2020).

The presentation engages in this scholarly inquiry with a particular focus on enabling higher education. Using a collaborative autoethnographic approach, three PASS leaders in an enabling education institution wrote first-person reflections in response to guiding questions developed by the PASS supervisor, and engaged in group discussion to elaborate on their reflections. They then worked with the supervisor to identify various themes in their reflections which the group then conceptualised as PEER pedagogy: pedagogy that focuses on peers' Perspective, Emotion, ability to Envisage a better way of being, and the act of Re-verification, that is, making efforts to use their own intelligence to do the work. It was found that PEER pedagogy enables students to build momentum and strive for achievements long-term instead of merely attending to one specific learning need. Implications for teaching and learning within each PEER dimension will be discussed in regard to promoting whole person learning experience for students in enabling education.

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SESSION 03C

Reasons for saying 'I Do!': Students' completion of formative feedback tasks in an enabling unit

**Mrs Katrina Johnston, Mrs Hermina Conradie, Mrs Peppa Piacun,
Mrs Christina Maurer-Smolder, Mrs Michelle Gray**

CQUniversity

In Computing Skills for University (CSU), a CQUniversity enabling unit, students are encouraged to submit weekly Consolidation Activities (CAs) for formative feedback. This research set out to measure the relationship between students' attitudes towards and the completion of the CAs, and students' overall achievement in the unit. The investigation was carried out in two stages. Initially, anonymous surveys were advertised to CSU students enrolled at the end of Term 3 2019 and Term 1 2020. Students were asked questions about if and why they completed the activities and how these affected learning and achievement. Finally, analytics from the online learning platform (Moodle) were used to find the number of CAs submitted by individual students and these were compared to their overall grade. Additionally, their overall grade and CA submission rate was compared with their pre-enrolment self-assessment of their computing skills. Around 47% of students regularly submitted the CAs and there was a positive correlation between the submission of CAs and students' results with the more CAs submitted resulting in higher overall grades compared to those who submitted fewer CAs. While there was a positive correlation between the self-assessment value and Final Grade in CSU, it was not as strong as the submission of CAs vs Grades achieved. The survey responses reinforced this with students finding the feedback from lecturers on the CAs were a valuable resource in their learning and was helpful for practising the skills needed in the Assessments. Based on these conclusions it is recommended that STEPS applicants' pre-enrolment self-assessment questions should be reviewed to give a more accurate view of the skills needed. In addition, an argument could be made that making the CAs compulsory might result in an overall increase in grades and higher engagement within the unit.

SESSION 03D

What's the problem represented to be? The Job Ready Graduates Package: Navigating widening participation in a zero tolerance environment

Ms Kate Sheppard

James Cook University

Universities and educators must navigate a complex terrain when enacting widening participation within a neo-liberal context. In 2020, the Job Ready Graduates Package (Department of Skills Education and Employment, 2020) passed in parliament. This legislation presents a complex set of reforms for Australian universities that fundamentally change the university landscape for staff and students. To address perceived issues of university quality and economic vulnerability, universities and students are now subject to a range of regulatory measures. First, universities must assure that students are "academically suitable" (Department of Education Skills and Employment, 2020, p. 54) for study. Second, institutions are required to monitor and report on student progress continuously to ensure that students are "genuine" and meeting minimum academic standards (Department of Education Skills and Employment, 2020, p. 55). If students fail to meet these standards, then their commonwealth support is revoked.

The impacts of these reforms are immense. University staff and students must attempt to widen student participation, in a 'zero tolerance' environment, where notions of capability, and suitability dominate. These reforms encourage staff to increase numbers of students enrolled at university, but also to strictly assess their preparedness and warn them thoroughly that there is no safety net for failure.

To mitigate this, universities must act thoughtfully to support students. This presentation will interrogate the key widening participation policy documents that structure and shape the work of university staff. The presentation will utilise Bacchi's (2009) What's the Problem Represented to Be Approach to analyse the problem representations that underpin widening participation policy in Australia, and the impacts of these. In doing so, this presentation will identify and describe the policy structures, drivers and processes that act as barriers and enablers in the widening participation agenda and possible future directions.

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NATIONAL BENCHMARKING PRESENTATION

Looking ahead: Towards a national framework for Australian enabling programs

Ms Charmaine Davis, Dr Suzi Syme, Mr Chris Cook, Dr Sarah Dempster, Ms Lisa Duffy, Dr Sarah Hattam, Mr George Lambrinidis, Ms Kathryn Lawson, Dr Stuart Levy.

UniSQ College, UniSQ; SCU College, SCU; School of Access Education, CQUni; University College, UTas; Academic Pathway Programs, ECU; UniSA Futures, UniSA; College of Indigenous Futures Education & the Arts, CDU; Centre for Enabling Pathways, Curtin University; Institute of Education, Arts and Community, Federation University.

Enabling education programs have existed in Australia since the mid-1970's, and emerged independently in response to the needs of individual universities and the varying cohorts of students they serve. The exclusion of these programs from the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) has meant they have remained unregulated, and without a national framework. The development of academic standards is a dynamic, consensus driven process, and benchmarking provides a method through which academics from across institutions can work in partnership to reach shared understandings and improve and align practices. An initial project to benchmark the curriculum and learning outcomes, approaches to assessment and standards of enabling programs at three regional universities (Syme et al., 2020) found a high degree of comparability. This was expanded to nine universities in 2021, with representation from all Australian states and the Northern Territory, and accounting for approximately half of all enabling education enrolments nationally. The findings of this expanded benchmarking project demonstrate a high degree of coherence across programs through a strong alignment of learning outcomes and a shared understanding of the standards required of students exiting from these programs. Within the context of this supportive, collegial academic community, the sharing of curriculum documents and assessment practices, along with blind marking of deidentified scripts allowed for open discussion and the identification of good practices and areas for improvement. The outcomes of this project will inform the development of validated and recognised standards for the sector and contribute to the inclusion of enabling education in a revised AQF. It will further enhance the robust collaboration already occurring across the sector, and increase the visibility of this critical sub-sector of higher education in Australia.

SESSION 04A

Enabling educators in a Covid context: Pressure for practitioners and avenues for agency and change

Anita Olds, Susan Hopkins, Joanne Liscandro, Helen Scobie, Rebekah Sturniolo-Baker, Ana Larsen, Marguerite Westacott, Juliette Subramaniam, Angela Jones

Murdoch University, University of Southern Queensland, Murdoch University, The University of Newcastle, Murdoch University, Central Queensland University, University of the Sunshine Coast, Western Sydney University, The University of Newcastle

Previously the Mental Health Special Interest Group (SIG) within the NAEAA (National Association of Enabling Educators Australia) explored the impact of emotional labour load on enabling practitioners and the links to teacher burnout (Crawford et al., 2018; Olds et al., 2018). Select members of this group, with the addition of new co-authors, return again to present findings from a unique qualitative collaboration. The purpose of the study was to explore the lived experience of eight enabling practitioners across six Australian institutions during the height of the pandemic. The personal reflections written and then analysed highlighted the time pressures faced by enabling practitioners, and how this pressure was compounded during the pandemic. Captured was the struggle to maintain a work/life balance amid unrealistic workload models. The paradox was stark, whilst these practitioners exist in a setting underpinned by equity, social justice and an "ethic of care" (Motta & Bennett, 2018) for students, this ethic was not necessarily extended to the most vulnerable academic care workers. Work conditions for these 'underrepresented and unacknowledged' enabling practitioners who 'do not fit into the usual disciplinary communities' (Bennett et al., 2016, p. 217) was increasingly precarious (Butler, 2004) during the pandemic. The study echoes previous concerns that neoliberalism creates a time-space compression (Harvey, 1990), cultures of urgency that lead to malaise (Sugarman & Thrift, 2017) and corrosive norms that impact academics materially, physically and psychologically (Shahjahan, 2020). The method for this study however, a collective autoethnography, returned some culture of care to the participating practitioners, fostering a new sense of solidarity, resilience and agency, reducing alienation and boosting psychological capital (Olds et al., 2018). This research illuminates relevant challenges for the enabling sector as it continues to be impacted by the pandemic and neoliberalism.

SESSION 04B

Transferable skills: Enabling students' success in Undergraduate STEM courses

Catherine Burgess

Pathways and Learning Support Centre, University of Newcastle

Building greater equity and diversity in STEM undergraduate study can be achieved by building strong transitional skills in Enabling STEM students. Each year over 500 students study STEM based subjects in the University of Newcastle's Enabling programs with little more than Year 10 general science, little family interest in STEM, no previous STEM aspirations and poor experiences with school science and education altogether. Regardless of this background, my research has shown that many do have a burning desire to find themselves in a new role, gain a better understanding of the world around them and make a positive contribution to society through a STEM based career. When students successfully complete their enabling STEM courses and move to undergraduate STEM programs they are faced with higher workloads, different pedagogical approaches, less course flexibility, financial commitment, and the subsequent impacts of this on their lives. This paper draws on my HDR research, exploring how post enabling students cope with this transition and the transferable skills they have gained from their enabling STEM experience. This new research will give voice to the experiences of second- and third year, post-Enabling STEM Undergraduates. By examining the students' perspectives on transferable skills and knowledge gained from their Enabling journey, enabling educators will gain further insight into aspects of Enabling pedagogy which develop skills critical to a successful transition through a STEM undergraduate degree. By highlighting the importance of successful learning experiences in their Enabling courses and by challenging initially limiting perceptions of their capability and intelligence, this post-Enabling undergraduate students, who had previously had no science aspirations, debunk the notion of who is capable of completing a STEM based degree and leave an important legacy for future Enabling STEM students.

SESSION 04C

Creative Enabling: Multimodal assessment for engagement with the academy

Ms Jane Habner, Dr Kung-Keat Teoh

Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching, Flinders University

Students undertaking enabling programs not only struggle to enter university, they also often struggle to stay (Jarvis, 2021). Therefore, developing a sense of belonging in these students is crucial to their early, and continued, success (Pedler et al., 2022). One barrier to this sense of belonging is the disconnect enabling students often feel with the academy. Enabling programs, by their nature, focus on developing the range of academic literacies required for a traditional view of student success. However, these skills, particularly academic reading and writing, and academic integrity and referencing, can be seen by students as gate-keeping tools; a means by which they are precluded from university because they do not yet speak (or write) in the required academic language. Enabling students have diverse past learning experiences, many of which may have been negative (Lisciandro et al., 2018), but, as Roberts (2011) argues, embracing this diversity could result in higher levels of student success. One potential approach is the application of artefact-oriented learning, or multimodal assessment. Multimodal assessment, which is the use of different media to create a single artefact, has been applied extensively to language learning (Anderson & Kachorsky, 2019). We posit that it also has the potential to engage students in their development of traditional academic literacies in a non-traditional way.

In this presentation we describe the introduction of a multimodal assessment task, a group-based creation of a creative artefact, in our enabling program. The identified challenges we hoped to address with this task, particularly around student anxiety, confidence, and engagement, will be examined, as will the intended benefits, relating to choice, flexibility, and the opportunity to recognise and value the existing skills these students bring to their studies. We will also address the pedagogical challenges faced, and solutions found, with introducing this form of assessment.

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SESSION 04D

The Be Positive Program: Helping students be more resilient in their learning and life journey

Trixie James, Katrina Johnston, Ruth O'Neill, Sara Hof

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Investigation into the benefits of psychological wellness and personal well-being is often an overlooked construct in research, especially in relation to student success at university. This is evident with research output on depression and anxiety extraneously exceeding the research output on subjective well-being (James & Walters, 2020). Positive Psychology (PP) has the potential to increase psychological well-being and could be the missing link to improved student engagement and retention. Research by James and Walters (2020) found that implementing PP strategies, not only improved the student experience, but also facilitated positive changes in the students' personal lives. The 'Be Positive' initiative is a 12-week Positive Psychology program developed explicitly to build students' confidence and encourage a more optimistic mindset towards their study. The 'Be Positive' initiative presents a series of 12 original animated videos and worksheets each focusing on a different PP concept. The program was piloted with enabling students in their first term in the STEPS enabling course at CQUniversity. This paper presents the findings from the research which explored students' perceptions of the effectiveness and efficacy of the program and investigated the positive affect it had on them. The program was developed using Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) Action Research model as this approach is a powerful methodology for enacting social change. As this project investigates the implementation of a self-enhancement program, it offers a postmodernist epistemological stance and allows construction of knowledge through the research process. A mixed methods approach was employed to collect and analyse the data. The quantitative analysis revealed overarching patterns in students' perceptions whilst the qualitative data exemplified and explained the results. The participants' responses were overwhelmingly positive with many attributing value to the program and sharing how the concepts enabled them to reframe their way of thinking and flourish as students.

SESSION 05A

Passing the second time around: An investigation into students who successfully repeat courses within enabling programs

Dr Victoria Fielding

University of Adelaide

Ms Tanya Weiler

University of South Australia

University enabling courses have become a key pathway for students from diverse educational backgrounds to gain access to higher education, particularly widening participation amongst students with low socioeconomic status. In the past 40 years, the Australian university sector has significantly grown its enabling student cohort. Due to the important role enabling programs play in university participation and success, much study has focused on the factors that influence motivation, persistence, retention and attrition amongst enabling students. However, less is known about the experiences and attributes of students who face the barrier of failing or withdrawing from an enabling course, but who show persistence and motivation to successfully repeat that course to work towards completion of their program. This paper presents the findings of a research project which consisted of in-depth interviews with UniSA College students who have faced such challenges in their study, and persevered to pass courses they have previously failed or withdrawn from due to these challenges. Analysis of enrolment data showed only a small percentage of students attempt a course after initially failing or withdrawing, and those who do repeat are not always successful the second time around. Through in-depth analysis of the experience of the rare students who do successfully repeat a course, this research helps to inform understanding of the reasons why students may not be successful in passing enabling courses, and crucially, how they, with the support of their educators, can motivate themselves to persist with their studies to ultimately graduate and continue their pathways into undergraduate degrees.

SESSION 05B

Teachers as learners: Indigenising curriculum for enabling education students

Mrs Lisa Amerikanos, Mr Rory Jeffs

University College, College of Business and Economics, University of Tasmania

At the University of Tasmania (UTAS), in the University Preparation Program, at the height of the pandemic in 2020, the Unit Coordinators of UPP014 Writing in Practice set out to rewrite the curriculum to improve engagement, imbue cultural knowledges, and focus on critical reading and writing to produce learning outcomes that reflected the skills needed for essay writing. Adopting one of UTAS's core values of a place-based education and applying it to strategy of indigenising the curriculum (Guerzoni & Walter, 2020), we included in the unit the topic of Tasmanian History, examining the Risdon Cove massacre of 1804, and exploring the legacy of colonisation, as well as notions of identity and nationalism. The topic proved popular, with the linked essay question for the summative task the most selected question by students. However, in this process, we as Unit Coordinators faced several challenges in terms of our methodology. As non-Indigenous educators, we needed to revisit our own teaching philosophies and ensure proper process around consulting with key Indigenous knowledge-holders has been followed, including with Indigenous students themselves. This informed a change to our pedagogical approach where we as educators had to take a discomforting but necessary position of 'vulnerable' learners alongside students to achieve a more culturally sensitive curriculum. This paper will discuss the learnings of this process as it reflects firstly on the value of 'epistemic vulnerability' for non-Indigenous educators involved in the process of indigenising curriculum for enabling education programs (Gilson, 2011; Howells, 2012). And secondly, we will discuss the issues around including Indigenous voices in their curriculum to engage study skill development without falling for the 'guest-speaker fallacy'.

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SESSION 05C

Clicking: A constructivist grounded theory for the process of learning mathematics in a university enabling course

Dr Gemma Mann

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Students who enter university enabling courses have often had barriers and disruptions in prior learning experiences. Many struggle in formal learning environments, particularly with mathematics, and some withdraw or fail. This attrition is detrimental to students' confidence, and undesirable for universities. Those students who do continue are often still not confident in learning mathematics. This paper proposes a model to assist enabling students in learning how to learn mathematics, both in their enabling courses and in future studies. Using a grounded theory methodology, thirteen students from an enabling course at one institution were interviewed about learning enabling mathematics. Seven interrelated categories reported by the students were identified, with the key category of 'clicking' emerging as an explanation of how the process of learning mathematics was constructed by learners themselves. For students, mathematics 'clicked' through a learning cycle of relating, holding interest, exploring ways, taking time, practising, and working through confusion; with each element of the cycle tailored for each student by the teacher. These findings offer a practical guide for teachers in enabling courses to use with their students to develop their knowledge of how to learn mathematics, and this has implications for students' ongoing success in their undergraduate studies.

SESSION 05D

Do I belong? An investigation into perceptions of self-efficacy, capability and sense of belonging of students in an enabling STEM-based nursing course.

Dr. Zoë Griffiths, Dr. Michelle Mansfield, Ms. Emily Rowley

Pathways and Academic Learning Support, University of Newcastle

Students from diverse backgrounds including first in family, (Garriott, Navarro & Flores, 2017) women (Cth of Australia, 2021), low socioeconomic background, and indigenous students (Frawley, 2017) are underrepresented in undergraduate STEM courses. Conversely, students from diverse backgrounds and equity groups are particularly well represented in transition programs such as Open Foundation (UON) and the enabling Science for Nursing courses. However, these students often struggle with the STEM content in the enabling courses and later in the undergraduate courses. Studies have shown that lower self-efficacy in students from diverse backgrounds in maths and science impact on successful completion of STEM-based university courses and programs (Peña-Calvo et al, 2016). Little research regarding self-efficacy and increasing a sense of belonging has been undertaken on enabling students and even less has been done in this area in STEM-based nursing courses.

This project draws upon Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) which suggests a range of contextual, personal, and behaviour factors influence career planning and development (Lent et al., 1994). This approach has been extended to explore student learning experiences and educational development (Lent et al., 2000; Garriott et al., 2017). This current research builds on SCCT and investigates whether embedded support mechanisms and pedagogical approaches impacted the student's feelings of self-efficacy, sense of belonging, worthiness, and academic success. A critical and care-full (Motta & Bennett, 2018) pedagogy utilising various inclusive teaching methods will be integrated into a STEM-based nursing course in the enabling program. This project will look at using a particular pedagogical method 'TEACH' that follows the implementation of Theory, Example, All together, Consolidation and Handling of skills. This paper discusses the preliminary findings from this project and the many barriers that enabling students encounter in their sense of belonging and self-efficacy in a STEM-based nursing course.

A mixed-methods approach was used to gather quantitative and qualitative data for this study which included a student cohort and a teaching cohort. A pre, mid and post course survey was administered to student cohort via Survey Monkey. Qualitative data will be assembled from both student participants and course staff. Through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with students (self-selected) the project team gathered qualitative data on student experiences of the course and expand on themes which arise in from the quantitative survey data.

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SESSION 06A

How does Social Innovation play a role in advancing the higher education's equity agenda?

Trixie James, Anne Braund, Ana Larsen, Herna Conradie, Leonie Keating

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Social Innovation (SI) has emerged in response to increasing social, environmental, and demographic challenges (Audretsch et al., 2022). As universities are a place of education and knowledge development, they play an important role in addressing societal challenges by contributing to the growth of human and social capital. This paper examines current SI literature in the specific context of Australian universities. What became evident within the literature is that there is limited understanding around SI and the role it plays within the equity agenda. For the purpose of framing this discussion, SI is defined as the interrelation of a socially constructed concept and an agentic mindset, centred on positive social change and empowerment of its actors. This paper considers the tangible influence that SI has on the equity agenda, identifying the impact that developing a SI mindset can have on underrepresented student groups entering university via access pathways. The authors propose that enabling programs could be classified as SI in action, as these programs were initiatives following government reforms to provide equitable access to university. Numerous researchers have highlighted the transformative effects of enabling programs (Braund et al., 2020; James, 2016; Willans, 2010; Willans & Seary, 2007), and this discussion paper proposes that Enabling Education, and inclusion and support programs can be considered SI in action. These unique programs and supports in universities promote social justice and social mobility through their integration within higher education. This paper outlines the value of empowering students to develop agentic SI mindsets for their own growth as they engage in their academic community and for the benefit of wider society. This discussion paper highlights the links between SI, Enabling Education and Higher Education's equity agenda, encouraging educators to critically reflect on the opportunities to empower SI student mindsets to produce positive change for equity students in their institutions and the broader community.

SESSION 06B

What Matters: responsive approaches to programs, course design and pedagogy

Assoc Prof Anna Bennett, Ms Kristen Allen

Pathway and Academic Learning Support Centre, University of Newcastle

This paper focuses on the importance of research and evaluation that is used to continuously reinform educators' understandings of what matters to students. Through such student focussed research and/or evaluation, both program and course design can become more responsive, dynamic and changing, in order to align with the issues, challenges and enablers all around us (physical, social, economic and personal) (Bennett, 2019). We discuss findings from a project commissioned by the Australian Government's Department of Education, Skills and Employment about what students experience as success as a result of participating in higher education. The study included 2,665 surveys and 72 interviews with undergraduate students across six Australian universities (Rubin et al., 2022). In addition to grades and getting a job, students identified other rich dimensions of success, such as being able to help others gain better outcomes, especially for those disadvantaged in society. We will discuss how such research and/or evaluation undertaken by educators is critical because it enables a closer understanding of students' experiences and how to better meet their needs. For example, student voices in this study were powerful for identifying what they said were some static, rigid and disengaging approaches to assessment in undergraduate programs, which were not engaging and flexible enough to meet students' needs. Students did not view their success in study as resulting from, but in despite of, inflexible and unmeaningful tasks. Importantly, many students who had entered their degree through an enabling program discussed their pathways education as much more student-centred and flexible. We will discuss the importance of responsive educational design and dialogical learning (Motta & Bennett, 2019), including through dialogical approaches to assessment, which are so often described by students as providing the important foundation for engaging and enabling their many subsequent successes.

SESSION 06C

Don't smile until Easter! How about a giggle?

Mr Andrew Higgins

JCU Pathways, James Cook University

Humour can be used to produce better educational outcomes. It may even improve student engagement and reduce anxiety.

Many educators are familiar with the adage “don't smile until Easter”, perhaps this is not as applicable as it was in the days of slates and chalk and should be retired alongside them. Masek et al.'s (2019) article details the findings of a survey investigating the use of humour in teaching. This work details that “[d]ata were descriptively analysed and the results show that students had a positive perception towards humour and there was a strong relationship between students' perceptions and the engagement of students in learning. It is suggested that teachers should understand the nature of humour and apply suitable and relevant types of humour during their teaching sessions” (p. 228).

This presentation will feature some strategies used in a tertiary enabling mathematics workshop and course organisation setting. Feedback collected demonstrates that the use of humour has a positive effect on learning and engagement. Ultimately, the focus is on building positive relationships. Humour is an excellent vehicle for this. As the quote attributed to Roosevelt goes, “People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care” (n.d.). These ideas also distract the students from the fact that the lecturer is not actually that good at mathematics ... he he.

Masek, A., Hashim, S., & Ismail, A. (2019). Integration of the humour approach with student's engagement in teaching and learning sessions. *Journal of Education for Teaching: JET*, 45(2), 228-233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2018.1548169>

SESSION 06D

Democratic Pedagogies in Initial Teacher Education: Co-constructing a Supportive Learning Framework

Dr Susan Raymond, Mrs Shaan Gilson

Education Futures, University of South Australia

Within initial teacher education (ITE) monologic pedagogies, prevalent in higher education, are contested for their failure to model effective teaching practice and address the relational aspects of teaching and learning. Drawing on a participatory qualitative action research process, this presentation reports on the findings of enacting enabling pedagogies in two ITE courses in the Master of Teaching program at the University of South Australia.

This presentation uniquely examines, from an insider and outsider's perspective, how enabling pedagogies can facilitate the co-creation of a supportive learning framework to address the challenges of mandated assessment requirements in ITE. The findings demonstrate the importance of shared power and accessing preservice teachers' (PSTs) funds of knowledge to develop an authentic, democratic learning environment. Furthermore, the findings illustrate the ways in which PST voices can be elicited, heard and supported to experience success on placement, whilst also completing formalised assessments.

This presentation is of significance to policy makers, researchers, teachers, leaders and teacher educators as it highlights the need to challenge the current approaches to pedagogy in higher education through the modelling of enabling pedagogies in ITE. Working from an assets-based approach, we propose a model for the development of a Supportive Learning Framework in ITE that can be fed forward into the careers of graduate teachers.

STUDENT VOICE SESSION

Enabling education has shaped me as a teacher.....

Hear from enabling alumni who have gone into a teaching degree and a career in teaching who reflect on how coming through an enabling pathway has shaped them as a teacher. If our role in enabling is to disrupt educational disadvantage, then we have queried whether our students take this lens with them into their teaching careers, and do they consider how their teaching can be inclusive and contribute to a widening participation agenda? Or to pose this in another way, have the discourses of social justice in education had an impact on the practices and teacher subjectivity of enabling alumni?

SESSION HOST



Jennifer Lawther
UniSA College

Jennifer Lawther started at the UniSA College as a mature-age student in 2018 and successfully completed the Foundation Course, receiving a High Achievement Award. The following year, Jennifer began her journey as a Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS) Leader at the College, whilst also beginning a Bachelor of Primary Education (Honours) program. Four years on, and currently in the 3rd year of her degree, Jennifer has been continuing to develop and refine her strategies to best support new UniSA College students in becoming confident, high achieving, successfully independent learners.

PANEL MEMBERS



Joshua Bradbrook
UniSA College Alumni

Hi everyone! My name is Joshua Bradbrook and I graduated from the 2012 UniSA college cohort. I enrolled in Foundation Studies, enabling me to develop a range of skills which have supported me throughout tertiary study, while building an appreciation for a range of subjects. Foundation Studies was more than a university entry course. It was an experience which heavily influenced my decisions and career trajectory through its flexibility to build a range of knowledge and skills which were imperative to my career and future studies.

After completing Foundation Studies, I was accepted into a double degree - Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education. Recently, I completed a postgraduate course in Trauma-Aware Education

through Queensland University of Technology, which continued to build on the foundational skills developed during my time at UniSA. I have been an Aboriginal Education Teacher, SACE coordinator, and am currently the 10-12 Year Level Leader at Charles Campbell College. I have taught across learning areas including English, Humanities and Research Project. I often discuss the benefits and advantages of students undertaking enabling programs to support them in building their capacities to be successful at university, knowing the tremendous impact it had on my own journey.



Tara Ogilvie
Central Queensland University Alumni

My name is Tara Ogilvie. I am a First Nation Indigenous woman, a mother of three daughters and a partner of almost 20 years. In 2020, I completed a Preparation Skill for University [STEPS] program which enabled me the opportunity to continue studying to complete a Bachelor of Education Primary. I am currently halfway through the second year of my degree.

I presently work as a casual teacher aide close to home, where I also had the opportunity to complete my first pre-service teaching placement. I enjoy being able to help the students where possible and being part of planning the lessons. The best part of it all is creating relationships with the students and creating a calm but inviting environment where students enjoyed being each day.

I was nervous to begin studying, as I felt uncertain that I could succeed. I spent hours on Moodle trying to keep up with the readings. I felt ashamed to ask for help, but I was determined to complete the program. By the end of the program, there was a lot that I learned from my lecturers, and I find myself using them when I plan my pre-service classes these days.



Holly Millican
Southern Cross University Alumni

My name is Holly Millican and I am a Mathematics Teacher at South Grafton High School. I completed the Southern Cross University Pathways to Success Program and went on to study both my Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Primary and Secondary Education Specialising in Mathematics, and my Master of Education specialising in Leadership and Welfare at Southern Cross University as well. I have been teaching for 5 years.

As well as my usual teaching work, I have developed, implemented and continue to run alternate Mathematics education programs for students and professional development for teachers. Through the creation of these programs, I have been awarded the 2019 Learning Edge Teaching Award, 2019 Young Alumnus of the Year Award, 2020 Teachers Guild of NSW Award and 2021 Australian Education Rising Star of the Year Award.

KEYNOTE SESSION



Senator Barbara Pocock
Greens Senator for South Australia

What does an enabling work and care system for Australia look like?

Barbara Pocock grew up on a mallee farm in South Australia. She is an economist and Emeritus Professor who has spent her life fighting for the rights of working people, women and low-income workers. She established and led the Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia until 2014 and was awarded an AM for services to industrial relations research and social justice in 2010. She has written many books and articles, worked in shearing sheds, on farms, in universities, in government and as a mother. Barbara became a South Australian Senator for the Greens in 2022. She is passionate about action on climate change and creating a sustainable future for future generations – in a world of greater economic justice. She lives in Adelaide with her partner Ian.

TUESDAY

KEYNOTE SESSION



Dr Nicole Crawford

*Adjunct Research Fellow, Curtin University, and Adjunct Lecturer,
University of Tasmania*

“On or under the radar?” Supporting student and staff mental wellbeing

Dr Nicole Crawford is a researcher and educator in higher education. She was a Senior Research Fellow (2020-2022) at the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) and a NCSEHE Equity Fellow (2019-2020). In the Fellowship research, she investigated proactive ways of supporting the mental wellbeing of mature-aged students in regional and remote Australia. Prior to the Fellowship, she was a Student Coordinator/Unit Coordinator/Lecturer/Tutor in Pre-degree Programs – which included the University Preparation Program – at the University of Tasmania (UTAS) for nearly a decade. Her research focuses on equity and inclusion in higher education, enabling education, and student and staff mental wellbeing. She initiated UTAS’s Social Inclusion Community of Practice, and the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) Special Interest Group on Mental Health.

Prior to joining UTAS, she was the Transition Coordinator in the Arts Faculty at The University of Western Australia (UWA), which involved: teaching; implementing support programs for Arts students and staff; coordinating SmARTS (an outreach program for year 11 high-school students); and conducting research in teaching and learning. In addition, she taught in the disciplines of History and Gender Studies, the areas in which she completed her PhD at UWA in 2008.

SESSION 07A

Using innovative technology for the creation of a mobile application to present study material in a computing unit”: Or as I like to call it My Textbook App

Katrina Johnston

CQUniversity

A textbook app was developed for Computing Skills for University, within the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies course at CQUniversity. Delivering knowledge dynamically with quizzes, interactive content and videos leads students to engage more actively with unit materials. Portable digital devices significantly support this, with some of the advantages of mobile learning including better information retention, faster learning, and improved engagement (Astria Learning, 2021). Anecdotal observation indicates that many students have digital devices on hand in class, and rather than the expense of purchasing a hardcopy textbook, they access the content using a handheld device. Therefore, it was felt that presenting the unit content through a specially designed mobile application would give more accessibility to the unit content. Currently, the textbook can be downloaded in pdf format. Unfortunately, pdfs display as a set font size with un-editable line breaks, and therefore a pdf is not practical to view on a mobile device. One of the underlying benefits of a mobile app textbook is the ability to update and edit data instead of waiting for the next print run. Wainwright (2012) notes that maintaining up-to-date learning resources is just one of the benefits of incorporating mobile technology as they are a viable alternative to printed textbooks. Additionally portable digital devices and textbook apps mean that learning can continue outside of the classroom. During the development and trial of the app, constraints were identified like the considerable fiscal costs associated with employing a technician to create and continuously update the content and the annual subscription fee of housing the apps on trusted platforms. Therefore, it was recommended that the app be converted to a responsive website, which reduces the need for technological expertise, avoids the expense of app store subscriptions, and allows for the content to be viewed on any device.

SESSION 07B

Curating a Course: An autoethnographic approach to curriculum design

Mr Paul Chojenta

Pathways & Academic Learning Support, University of Newcastle

One of the challenges faced by enabling educators in designing curriculum is determining what to include and what to leave out of their courses. As enabling courses are typically at an introductory level, there is a temptation to include a very broad range of content, yet as enabling courses are often delivered in a compressed timeframe, there is rarely the opportunity to address all relevant material. Thus, the process of course design for Enabling Educators becomes one of curation. Many factors may influence the choices made in designing a course. Educators might lean on canonical texts or renowned theorists, they may be guided by the design of courses that feed to or from their course, they may follow the design of similar courses at other institutions, or they may replicate the courses they studied themselves. None of these approaches is inherently problematic, but by reflecting on these choices, and taking a critical approach to the potential limitations and biases, a more complete and well-rounded curriculum might be developed.

This showcase will present an autoethnographic analysis of the design of the 'Screen and Cultural Studies' course in the University of Newcastle's Open Foundation Program, demonstrating how the personal experience of course designer has influenced the curriculum. In the course, students are given a choice of films each week to watch as the basis of their learning and assessment, a selection of 29 films in total. As an introductory course, it is therefore attempting to provide an overview of the entire history of cinema within that extremely limited number of examples. Reflecting on how that selection was initially made when the course was first designed in 2008 and how it has evolved since that time provides an insight into the unconscious decisions that often guide curriculum and how more conscious decisions might result in improved course design.

SESSION 07C

Enabling Academic Integrity through embedded curriculum, pedagogy and an educative approach

Dr Michael Brickhill

SCU College, Southern Cross University

Academic Integrity (AI) is of growing concern at universities nationally and globally (Birks et al., 2020). It is therefore important students are enculturated in the practice of AI early in their study program (Fudge et al., 2022). Students in Southern Cross University's enabling program (Preparing for Success Program [PSP]) are introduced to AI principles early in their study program through embedded curriculum and pedagogy which takes an educative approach. Within the foundation unit Managing Your Study (UNIP1001), students complete a module specifically addressing AI and participate in activities which prepare them for assessments and scaffold their understanding of:

- Academic integrity;
- Principles and mechanics of referencing; and
- Academic misconduct practices and strategies to avoid engaging in such practices.

Principles of AI introduced in UNIP1001 are reinforced in other PSP units via in-class activities and embedded online interactive activities which feed into assessments. AI breaches are referred to an automated Academic Integrity Management System (AIMS, introduced across the University in 2021). Referred students receive educative feedback to address their breach and the opportunity to resubmit the assessment concerned.

This study outlines embedded curriculum and pedagogy for PSP students, reviews breach referrals of students to AIMS, and summarises various educative measures to further students' AI knowledge and practice. This study will be of interest to enabling practitioners seeking to embed and promote AI practice at program level.

Birks, M., Mills, J., Allen, S. & Tee, S. (2020). Managing the mutations: academic misconduct in Australia, New Zealand and the UK. *International Journal for Educational Integrity* 16, 1-15

Fudge, A., Ulpen, T., Bilic, S., Picard, M. & Carter, C. (2022). Does an educative approach work? A reflective case study of how two Australian higher education Enabling programs support students and staff uphold a responsible culture of academic integrity. *International Journal for Educational Integrity* 18, 1-20.

SESSION 07D

Discovering simple course redesign tactics to improve student engagement with content, peers, and teaching staff in online human services courses

Dr Paula Rowe

UniSA Online, University of South Australia

Improving student engagement with learning materials, peers, and teaching staff in online courses characterised by flexible study options is an ongoing challenge in higher education (Leslie, 2020). On one hand, asynchronous learning activities enable students to choose when and how (or if) they participate, but this also poses discipline specific challenges, like the case of human service education; particularly in online programs that do not have fieldwork components for students to hone skills and build confidence for professional practice (Banham, 2019). How then, can we enhance online teaching practices to better equip students with dialogic skills and confidence to participate in class discussions as a critical building block for human service careers?

In response to this question, we crafted a mixed methods action research project informed by Motta and Bennett's (2018) pedagogies of care to investigate relational dynamics of building class dialogue online. The teaching intervention involved a seemingly simple act of relocating weekly class Zoom recordings from the course Panopto folder to the course forum to foster further discussion and include students who could not attend synchronous Zoom sessions. Data collection included the teacher's reflective journal, student survey, and focus group. Results demonstrated multiple ways the intervention created a deeper sense of student connection to peers and teaching staff, deeper critical engagement with content, and greater confidence to participate in discussions. However, these positive learning outcomes were also shaped by ways the teacher structured and facilitated both Zooms and forum discussions. Educators with already heavy workloads often feel added pressures to reinvent their teaching activities with innovative technologies, but this project demonstrates that simple, yet powerful course enhancements also exist if we tune in to the possibilities. Crucially, it also sheds new light on ways that active and caring teacher presence can strengthen student engagement in online environments.

SESSION 08A

Enhancing dialogue in the Open University Australia online course 'Tertiary Learning Strategies' through smart pencil technology: educators and learners' perspectives

Mrs Marie Abi Abdallah, Dr Thuy Hoang

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

Context: The last few years reinforced the need to keep practising enabling pedagogies and using modern technologies to support learners in higher education. Effective assessment feedback is an important part of the learning process (Price et al., 2010; Carless & Boud, 2018), and is essential to enhance students' learning and develop their ability to learn from their feedback to improve their performance (O'Donovan, Rust & Price 2016). However, feedback is perceived by educators and students to have diverse issues namely being underused, unappreciated, misunderstood, and unsatisfactory (Naomi et al. 2017; Winstone & Carless, 2019). This has been observed in our online course too, and in an effort to engage with our external students and provide them with more meaningful communication, we trialled an alternative medium of feedback by using iPads and smart pencil technologies to mark students' assessment in place of annotations, summary comments and rubric forms as they are the dominant methods used at universities (Ryan, Henderson & Phillips, 2019). This presentation explores educators and learners' perspectives on marked-up assessments to foster a valued teaching and learning experience in the online course 'Tertiary learning strategies'.

Objectives: Feedback can considerably impact, promote and strengthen student learning (Carless & Boud, 2018). This study focuses on educators incorporating 'Dialogic pedagogy' (Shor & Freire, 1987) in their teaching practices to connect with their learners. Using modern technologies (Manuguerra & Petocz, 2011; Grouling, 2018) like smart pencil technology, and providing detailed feedback on students' assessments, may promote dialogue between teachers and students (Nicol, 2010; Carless & Boud, 2018), and this could play a role in creating a positive learning experience.

Methods: Teachers in the course participated in marking up students' assessments, and they used iPads and smart pencils to provide students with constructive feedback which in a way is like the comments used on a separate feedback form. Except, the mark-up is more personalized as it targets individual needs of students and reminds them that there is someone at the other end of the computer. We conducted group discussions with all teachers and administered a survey to students to get their perspectives on the marked-up assessments and see if this could enhance their feedback experience.

Findings: Regarding the use of iPads and smart pencils, the tutors stated several opportunities such as establishing effective ways to maintain dialogue with their students in the online environment, nevertheless, they also indicated some challenges like the difficulty of writing on the iPad. The students' initial responses indicate that they are in favor of receiving marked-up notes on their assessments as the comments were more personal, easier to understand and directed to them.

SESSION 08B

Academic literacy in enabling education programs: A common teaching approach?

Ms Charmaine Davis

UniSQ College, University of Southern Queensland

Ms Kathryn Lawson

Centre for Enabling Pathways, Curtin University

Ms Lisa Duffy

Academic Pathway Programs, Edith Cowan University

The widening participation agenda in higher education has seen not only the rapid expansion of universities but also increased student and program diversity, and greater provision of flexible pathways into further study. Critical to supporting this growing student body is the need to help all students develop their ability to communicate confidently and effectively in their academic communities. However, academic literacy development in higher education is a contested field. Traditional approaches tend to focus on the provision of skills based remedial support for students who struggle with the academic literacy requirements of their discipline, or specialist courses for those from non-English speaking backgrounds. However, more contemporary approaches, such as genre-based and socialisation models along with discipline-based approaches are more inclusive and embedded in the wider curriculum. Unsurprisingly, academic literacy is a central focus of Enabling Education, and the sector has undergone a period of significant growth and development, supporting increasing numbers of students to prepare for undergraduate study. Our research explores how enabling programs across nine Australian universities address the development of academic literacy to help students to transition successfully into a wide range of disciplines and programs as they pursue further study. As part of a broader benchmarking project, we compared the nine academic literacy subjects offered by these universities to investigate whether they had a shared understanding of the concept of academic literacy. Further, we analysed curriculum materials and assessment practices to determine whether a shared model of academic literacy teaching was evident across these subjects, and if so, whether this model offered an effective approach to helping students develop academic literacy. The findings suggest that there was indeed a common approach, indicating an emerging disciplinary coherence across the enabling education sector, regardless of its exclusion from the Australian Qualification Framework.

SESSION 08C

Cultural Safety: Embedding equity in to enabling practice and pedagogy

Dr Elissa Elvidge

School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle

Mr Daniel Collins

Learning and Teaching Academic Division, University of Newcastle

Dr Joanne Hanley

Learning and Teaching Academic Division, University of Newcastle

In education, cultural safety encompasses an equitable and inclusive approach where a diversity of individuals can undertake learning with dignity and feel safe in an environment that is free from cultural bias. Increasingly, higher education policy is calling for institutions to embed cultural safety as a best practice approach to teaching, with an impetus to transform learning environments and improve equity of access. However, there is an absence of literature on definitions of cultural safety in higher education and only a small number of studies that have attempted to operationalise its principles in pedagogical practice. Very few researchers have explored how or if educators understand or enact cultural safety in the Australian higher education system.

Enabling students represent a unique cohort with many from socially marginalised backgrounds who have disproportionately experienced educational disadvantage. Thus, the need for cultural safety is particularly imperative for this cohort to ensure that students feel confident about their learning environment and their sense of belonging in higher education. Through a series of surveys and semi-structured interviews, a study at the University of Newcastle recruited enabling program staff in a range of roles, including educators and professional staff, to explore their understanding and operationalisation of the principles of cultural safety.

This presentation will share findings from the study which identify and analyse the ways in which the values of cultural safety are conceptualised and enacted in the enabling classroom and beyond at one university in order to provide insights on how universities can better support staff to understand and embed it into the various touch points of the enabling student journey. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the roadmap for cultural safety, equity and education initiatives at the enabling level and into undergraduate realms along with facilitating appropriate policy development and implementation.

SESSION 08D

Co-designing supports to encourage student engagement with course readings

Dr Cate Hudson

University of South Australia

Reading is beneficial to learning, yet evidence suggests that only a small proportion of students read the required course material (St Claire- Thompson et al., 2018). The reasons students don't tend to read course materials vary widely from student motivation (Crede & Kuncel, 2008), time limitations (Saeid & Eslaminejad, 2016) and English as a second language (Brook & Mitchell, 2019) and discipline-specific literacy levels (Fujimoto et al., 2011). This paper presents some of the findings from a critical participatory action research project designed to answer three questions 1. What are the factors that help or hinder students' engagement with learning preparation tasks (in this case reading)? 2. What strategies can be used to help students engage with those tasks? and 3. Are the strategies effective? Participants in the study were a cohort of 170 second year students in the Bachelor of Social work program at UniSA. The research design and methodology involved an online survey, a focus group, and learning analytics. The survey asked participants about their course reading habits, the factors that helped or hindered their reading, what made it easier for them to do the course reading and their suggestions for changes. Findings from participant data were used to design an intervention to increase engagement with course readings. The intervention included the way readings were presented, the number and the length of readings. Learning analytics data were then reviewed to determine whether the intervention had been successful.

SESSION 09A

Is there anybody out there? Educator perception of student engagement in the Zoomosphere

Gabriela Toth, Trixie James, Kerry Bond, Brijesh Kumar

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Melissa Tomlins

School of Graduate Research, CQUniversity

Since COVID-19 lockdown restrictions mandated the shift of face-to-face teaching to online delivery in March 2020, there has been increasing interest in the resulting impacts on students, educators, and institutions. However, while online student engagement continues to be centre stage in educational research, the educators' perceptions of student engagement in synchronous online classes is yet to gain sufficient attention. This study explores the transition to teaching via Zoom through the lens of educators in an enabling (access) course in an Australian university. The aim was to gather the educators' views on online pedagogies, interaction strategies, and their perceptions of student engagement. Data were drawn from two focus groups conducted with enabling educators who had been teaching a range of subjects via Zoom since March 2020. The findings offer accounts of the participants experiences in transitioning their teaching online, and the challenges in identifying student engagement in online classes. Paradoxically, while the functionality afforded by the Zoom platform enabled successful teaching, it also allowed students to manage their online presence by turning off their video cameras and microphones. In the absence of the verbal and non-verbal cues normally used by educators to gauge student engagement, the participants reported feeling unable to ascertain the effectiveness of their teaching, which had an impact on their confidence and enjoyment of teaching. The findings suggest educators need to develop new ways to gauge student engagement in the online classroom setting to continue to be responsive to students' learning while also feeling confident in their teaching ability.

SESSION 09B

Post-pandemic subjectivity and enabling pedagogy: Using action research to reimagine curriculum design as a socio-technical assemblage

Dr Rhian Morgan, Lisa Moody

James Cook University Pathways

In February 2020, we attended the “blessing for the university year” (a multifaith celebration attracting the most agnostic academics through offerings of free coffee/food) and listened to university dignitaries discuss weathering crises, floods, and fires; we joked, all that remained was pestilence. Then, the SARS-CoV-2 was a peripheral news story, and we had little idea how unfunny our butchered biblical references were to become. By March, the world was headed into lockdown and educators scrambled to shift years of face-to-face pedagogy online. In April, during the height of lockdown, the Government announced funding for short-courses aimed at helping unemployed and underemployed Australians access higher education (HE) and retrain after Covid-19. The funding package targeted areas of national priority (Health, Education, IT, and Science), focusing on expedience, online learning, and fee subsidisation. As a response to the economic downturn caused by Covid-19, these courses point to the role HE can play in post-pandemic community-building initiatives. Although, without careful pedagogical design, using HE to mediate workplace precarity, risks foregrounding neoliberal productivity agendas (Ferguson, 2016), at the expense of student wellbeing. This presentation documents the subsequent expedited development of a short-course pathway to HE. Convergence of social, political, and technological factors during the design process meant that the course could be viewed as a ‘socio-technical assemblage’ – an amalgamation of mutually influential human and non-human parts – and analyzed using Actor Network Theory (Latour). Combining this theoretical lens with an action research framework (Torbet; Levin and Greenwood) allowed us to reimagine the design process as a reflexive research exercise, not just a response to a governmental imperative. Almost three years on, pressure to streamline and cost-cut continues. Subsequently, we present a call-to-action for enabling practitioners to refocus on education as a relational process and leverage pedagogy to support development of inclusive learning communities.

SESSION 09C

Authentic assessment, digital learning, and enabling pedagogy

Ms Jennifer Stokes, Dr John Pike

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

Through exploring student perspectives and best practice approaches, this paper provides recommendations for authentic assessment in enabling education and beyond. The Australian tertiary sector has embraced authentic assessment (Australian Technology Network, 2020). Authentic assessment has clear benefits, working to engage and motivate students through purposeful learning aligned with real-world challenges (ACEL, 2016). The ADEPT Framework for enabling pedagogy strongly advocates purposeful learning (Stokes, 2022), which aligns with authentic approaches. Authentic assessment also provides opportunities for inclusive learning (Tai et al., 2022), supporting students to integrate their ‘values [...and] future aspirations’ (p. 9), while presenting opportunities for students to demonstrate ‘distinctiveness’ through showcasing individual capabilities (p. 10). However, there is a significant knowledge gap around implementing authentic assessment, particularly in enabling programs with almost no literature available.

To address this knowledge gap, we explored student perspectives on alignment between assessment and real-world challenges in a digital literacy course at an Australian university. Enabling pedagogical approaches are embedded within the course, which value the strengths individual students bring and support the development of confidence, capability and agency (Stokes, 2017). Building on Forsyth and Evans (2019) exploration of authentic assessment for inclusion beyond work-readiness, we conducted mixed-methods research regarding student perspectives on digital learning and authentic assessment. To identify what practices are most beneficial and empowering, student perspectives were documented via an online survey using Ashford-Rowe, Herrington and Brown’s ‘critical elements of authentic assessment’ (2014). Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) was conducted on responses (n=25), which identified insights about motivation, perceived relevance, and authenticity of assessment tasks. Through this analysis, we have generated research-informed strategies to assist enabling educators to embed authentic assessment, which prepare students to succeed at undergraduate level, while also developing skills for success in graduate careers and active societal participation in an increasingly digital world.

SESSION 09D

Belonging in the Law Classroom: Enacting dialogic pedagogy and funds of knowledge approaches to promote student belonging and confidence first year law

Dr Sarah Moulds

Justice and Society Unit, University of South Australia,

The idea that students can and need to belong to a higher education community has become engrained within higher education policy and practice. Past studies (e.g. Ahn & Davis, 2020; Gijn, Grosvenor & Huisman, 2020) have identified a strong causal link between students' sense of belonging at University and student retention. This has led to a sustained focus on developing institutional strategies to improve student engagement, largely focused on extra-curricular supports or activities, but less focus on what happens in the classroom to foster student belonging.

By focusing on student belonging in the online (Gravett & Ajjawi, 2021) or physical classroom (Thompson & Houston, 2020; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017), this Project builds on the findings of past studies, including local research undertaken by Webster, Richards, de Zwart, Reilly and LeMire, 2018 and Hattam and Weiler, 2020 and a recent study on academic belonging in first year contexts conducted by Kahu, Ashley & Picton in 2022. It provides a fresh perspective for teaching staff to understand student retention and engagement and create space for programmatic approaches to curriculum review and assessment.

Working directly with law discipline staff and students through a series of focus group interviews, this Project explores what 'belonging' means for different cohorts of students and identifies existing classroom-based supports and develop new strategies for fostering belonging in the classroom across the compulsory first-year courses within the UniSA Law Program.

This Project also utilises dialogic approaches (e.g. Shor & Freire, 1987) to provide students with opportunities to talk and explore within the classroom setting, as well as connecting with their life worlds and funds of knowledges (eg Gonzalez et al 1995) to help students identify the existing skills and resources that they bring to the law studies.

The Project involves an evaluation of pre-existing data (e.g. myCourseExperience, attrition interviews), and new data obtained through interviews with first-year law teachers and law students as well as insights shared by staff across the University of South Australia's Justice and Society Unit, Teaching Innovation Unit and Student Engagement Unit. The two high level themes explored are (1) what student belonging means for first-year law students and teachers and (2) what practices have been employed in the law classroom toward fostering a sense of student belonging.

Findings of this research will be shared during this Presentation along with preliminary implementation outcomes including practical frameworks, exemplars and resources designed to First Year Law teachers with building blocks that they can utilise to foster student belonging in their classroom.

PANEL SESSION

University of South Australia Aboriginal Pathway Program Presentation

Chair Dr Nazz Oldham

APP Program Director UniSA College

This panel will discuss the relationship which drive UniSA's Aboriginal Pathway: an enabling program offered across South Australia at four regional sites and in Adelaide. Established in 2016, the APP is grounded in recognising and embracing that multiple knowledges and ways of doing need to co-exist in the academy and 'that the time for the primacy of a single Western, euro-centric knowledge subsuming others is over' (O'Shea et al., 2016). Two-way learning informs the reflexive growth of the program over seven years through feedback from student and community voices. As Yunkaporta (2009) has suggested, 'if we find the overlap between our best ways of learning and the mainstream's best ways of learning then we will have an equal balance.' The team-based approach at the core of the APP is designed to support student success through respectful relationships engaged in communication, consultation, and collaboration. As non-Aboriginal educators working alongside Aboriginal scholars, staff and community members, we seek to collaborate consistently, working together in striving to create a space for equal balance while preparing students for degrees which overwhelming still privilege Western perspectives. Consistent with scholarship of Aboriginal student belonging and success at university is the need to provide students with ongoing support to understand academic expectations and to decipher assumed institutional knowledges and policy (Kinnane et. al., 2014). The APP panel is comprised of staff involved in the Aboriginal pathway in both teaching and institutional roles as well as students who will share some of their understandings of approaching such a program from a position of genuine collaboration.

Kinnane, S., Wilks, J., Wilson K., Hughes, T., Thomas, S., (2014). 'Can't be what you can't see: the Transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students into higher education, Final report to the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

O'Shea, S., et al. (2016). 'Shifting the blame in higher education - social inclusion and deficit discourses.' Higher Education Research & Development 35(2): 322-336.

Yunkaporta, T. K. 2009. Aboriginal pedagogies at the cultural interface. Professional Doctorate (Research) thesis, James Cook University.

PLENARY SESSION

Access: Critical explorations of equity in higher education journal session

Struggles for access to and participation in higher education have a long history and continue to present challenges across a range of contexts. Access invites critical debates at the intersection of higher education and inequalities of international interest and significance. The journal is committed to extending the scope of exploration around questions of access, equity and widening participation including but also beyond admissions and entry. The journal welcomes contributions that develop sustained critique and extend the terms of debate, including those that take up creative, critical and emerging approaches and methods.

Join members of the Access executive editorial team, via Zoom, to discuss the aims and scope of the journal as well as processes for submitting a contribution.

SESSION 10A

Enabling LGBTIQ+ inclusion: small changes, big impact

Dr Gemma Mann

School of Access Education, CQUniversity Australia

Enabling educators are already very inclusive, understanding of students who have had prior barriers, and are particularly adept at addressing different learning needs (Motta & Bennett, 2018). However, one particular cohort of enabling students have an additional difficulty to overcome. For students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, or other diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, (LGBTIQ+), education spaces may have been very harrowing, and they have often faced bullying or discrimination (Allen, Cowie, & Fenaughty, 2020). While they are similar to many other enabling students in that they have missed out on education, may not have finished school, dropped out or failed, or had mental health impacts (James, 2016), students who identify in this community also can have an ingrained distrust of institutions and may not be confident that they will be accepted. Enabling educators stand at the gateway, and our actions, intentional or otherwise, can have drastic influence over whether a student stays in the course or leaves, the quality of the experience they have, and how much they feel they belong (Syme, Roche, Goode, & Crandon, 2021). Many educators who do not come from the community themselves, are unaware of discrimination (subtle discrimination in particular as it is very difficult to see if you are not personally impacted), do not understand the relationship between a student's past experiences and the impact of any present prejudice, and may not have the knowledge of how to act and what to say to both counter discrimination and also increase inclusion (inclusive language, inclusive examples and teaching materials). Through ongoing practitioner reflexive practice in training in the LGBTIQ+ space (Mann, 2022), and as an enabling educator (Mann, 2021; Mann & Salem, 2017), I have analysed these impacts, and developed practices educators can use to promote inclusion, foster understanding, and create an environment where students can thrive. I have found that even small changes, a few words, and small actions can have a massive difference to the experience of these students. In this presentation I will outline how enabling educators can be the rainbow in the stormy skies of educational experiences for LGBTIQ+ students.

SESSION 10B

'Your next biggest challenge could be around the corner': the importance of professional development for Educator wellbeing

Ms Tanya Weiler & Dr Sarah Hattam

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

While a commitment to social justice in education can be a deeply rewarding experience, the emotional labour of teaching increasingly diverse student cohorts has been recognised as impacting educators. In 'super-diverse' cohorts of students commonly found within enabling programs where students have commonly experienced educational disadvantage this can be even further pronounced (Crawford et al., 2018; Crawford & Smith, 2018). Teaching within these spaces requires a tailored pedagogical approach, underpinned by supportive professional development to allow educators to both expand on their practice and support not only the well-being of their students but also their own (Brewster et al., 2022). This presentation reports on the importance of both in-person and online professional development initiatives in critical enabling pedagogies at a South Australian university. The suite of initiatives offered aim to build communities of practice and include Professional Learning Workshops, Teaching Squares and a year-long Action Research series. Results of a survey of online professional development modules alongside semi-structured interview data with over 20 teaching staff reveal both Educator vulnerabilities and strengths. Key themes from the investigation include a sense of collegiality and working as a team; feeling supported and having a sense of agency; and alleviating the pressure of scholarly outputs through connection of teaching and research nexus across the activities. We argue that consistent, structured and varied professional development opportunities which enable educators to engage with one another have a strong impact on both educator and student wellbeing.

Brewster, L., Jones, E., Priestley, M., Wilbraham, S. J., Spanner, L. & Hughes, G. (2022). 'Look after the staff and they would look after the students' cultures of wellbeing and mental health in the university setting, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 46:4, 548-560,

Crawford, N. L., & Johns, S. (2018). An Academic's Role? Supporting Student Wellbeing in Pre-university Enabling Programs. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 15(3).

Crawford, N., Olds, A., Lisciandro, J., Jaceglav, M., Westacott, M., & Osenieks, L. (2018). Emotional labour demands in enabling education: A qualitative exploration of the unique challenges and protective factors. *Student Success*, 9(1), 23-33. doi: 10.5204/ssj.v9i1.430.

SESSION 10C

Principles for assessment in enabling education: A scoping review

Dr Elizabeth Goode, Dr Pranita Anand, Dr James Valentine, Ms Amita Krautloher

Academic Portfolio Office, Southern Cross University, UNSW Business School, University of New South Wales, Tertiary Enabling Program, Charles Darwin University, Division of Learning and Teaching, Charles Sturt University

Assessment is a powerful influence on how students experience higher education (HE). It frames what students learn and achieve (Boud, 2010), and has the potential to build students' confidence and motivation or to heighten their anxiety and fear (Christie & Morris, 2021). Cognisant of these potential impacts, enabling educators have over time developed assessment practices that aim to improve learning outcomes for enabling students. These practices include flexibility, alternative assessments, structured support and many more. However, due to the diversity of enabling programs and practices there is a lack of understanding about what constitutes best practice in designing assessments for enabling cohorts. To inform a greater understanding of the principles underpinning enabling assessment, a scoping review (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005) of enabling education literature was conducted. Three databases and thirteen targeted publication sources were searched for peer-reviewed journal articles and reports pertaining to Australian enabling education and assessment over a ten-year period from 2012 to 2022. From the 765 sources located, 25 were selected for review. This presentation reports on preliminary findings from this review in relation to three core questions: Where, by whom and how are assessments in Australian enabling education discussed in the HE literature? What pedagogical principles are explicitly connected to assessments in Australian enabling education? And finally, where do opportunities exist for developing the literature base on assessment in Australian enabling programs?

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology: Theory and Practice*, 8(1), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>

Boud, D. (2010). Assessment 2020: Seven Propositions for Assessment Reform in Higher Education. Australian Learning and Teaching Council. https://www.uts.edu.au/sites/default/files/Assessment-2020_propositions_final.pdf

Christie, H., & Morris, N. (2021). Assessment and emotion in higher education: The allure of blogging. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 26(2), 148-163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2021.1909922>

SESSION 10D

Enabling the unpacking and re-packing of transcultural schoolbags through an immersive placement experience

Dr Martyn Mills-Bayne, Dr Susie Raymond, Ms Rebekah Hudson

University of South Australia, University of South Australia, Department for Education SA

A National Teacher Workforce Action Plan has been developed to address the critical teacher shortage in Australia. Proposals such as the fast-tracking of visas and an accelerated path to citizenship seek to address shortages in high-demand teaching areas such as early childhood. With the easing of Covid 19 government restrictions, and a potential pathway to citizenship and possible career, international early childhood preservice teachers (IPSTs) are now returning to our shores. However, whilst IPSTs come with vast funds of knowledge and represent the diversity of early childhood classrooms in Australia, the cultural capital of IPSTs is not always acknowledged or valued.

This presentation examines how enabling pedagogies support IPSTs to unpack their virtual schoolbags and re-pack them with cultural tools to scaffold their learning in professional experience placements in their initial teacher education program.

In 2022 a qualitative interpretive research study was developed to examine the role of an immersive placement experience in the Master of Teaching Early Childhood program at UniSA. The findings of this research project highlighted the significance of an enabling pedagogies approach to scaffold the placement experience for IPSTs through the co-construction of workshops and an immersive placement experience. The immersive placement experience enabled the IPSTs to unpack and re-pack their transcultural schoolbags and develop their 'capacities to engage with the existing cultural and linguistic diversities' in the junior primary classroom.

This presentation provides critical insights into enabling and culturally responsive pedagogies to develop IPSTs transcultural understandings, whilst also highlighting the funds of knowledge IPSTs bring to the classroom. Such pedagogies may address the significant workforce shortage and callings from policy makers to diversify the early childhood teaching workforce.

SESSION 10E

Missed your ATAR?: What university study means to young adults and why they persevere with the education system.

Mr Peter Power, Dr Meg Vertigan

Pathways and Academic Learning Support, University of Newcastle

Enabling programs are often marketed as 'second chance education,' with many students with a low Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) being categorised as dropouts or disengaged (Savelsberg, Pignata, & Weckert, 2017). In contrast, many students feel that their admission to an enabling program is their first chance of academic success. Students leaving high school without an ATAR often have complex circumstances rather than academic difficulties. This paper outlines the narratives of young (18-21) enabling students and their attitude towards education, examining issues such as poverty, domestic matters, mental health, conflicting advice regarding subjects, and bullying. Despite this, students classified as unsuccessful at high school continue to pursue a pathway to higher education. This study contained two surveys comprising of multiple choice, Likert scale and short answer questions. These surveys sought to discover students' reasons for enrolling, preconceived ideas of university study, and whether their expectations had been met. Focus groups were also held to gain a deeper perspective of students' attitudes towards both high school and enabling education. Most respondents completed year 12 but did not receive the required ATAR for their chosen course. Others did not complete their Higher School Certificate due to being homeschooled, domestic and housing issues, or mental illness. Results suggested that enabling students chose to persevere with education to reach a specific career. This paper, therefore, rejects negative rhetoric to students with a low ATAR, including the promoting of enabling programs as 'second chance' courses. Students demonstrated commitment and resilience with many working and commuting to facilitate their education. Participating students expressed satisfaction with their program, citing relevant courses, adult learning environment, and flexible study arrangements. While responses in this pilot study were statistically insignificant, students' perspectives are important as they confirm the requirement of an andragogical approach as our engagement with young enabling students continues to evolve.

SESSION 11A

Leading from the margins : Advocating for enabling practitioners' role in improving higher education

Mr Russell Crank

Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts, University of Southern Queensland

The lack of research studying the experiences of enabling practitioners has potential to marginalise these academics and ignore their distinctive contributions to higher education. Studies of academics' experiences in their disciplines play a significant role in higher education as these studies emphasise the unique contribution of a discipline's pedagogy and curriculum, while also recognising and validating the academics' positions in academia. Thus, the lack of research studying the experiences of enabling practitioners represents a gap in knowledge that could support and advocate for these practitioners' contribution to adult pedagogy and place in higher education, as well as giving voice to their concerns and professional development requirements. This phenomenographic study drew on 31 open-ended questionnaires and 14 semi-structured interviews with enabling practitioners to investigate their experiences in, and understandings of, working in enabling education. The study generated five qualitatively distinct ways the participants experienced and understood their work. The descriptive categories were working as an: Equity Advocate, Student Academic Developer, Empowerer, Carer and Educator. One interpretation of the study's findings is that the descriptive categories represent enabling practitioners' holistic and comprehensive contribution to widening university participation. This interpretation suggests that a proactive and intentional focus on equity, access and inclusivity was the overarching purpose of enabling practitioners' work, supported by student academic development, student empowerment, and student care, all underpinned by quality learning and teaching practices. The study also indicates that the inherent nature of work in a pathway program potentially marginalises these practitioners and devalues their contributions to both equity and adult pedagogies in higher education. The potential for marginalisation of enabling practitioners calls for better recognition of enabling practitioners' academic standing, the development of enabling education as a discipline with distinct pedagogies and curriculum, and greater support for researchers and research within enabling education.

SESSION 11B

Shame and Blame: the impact of traditional / non-traditional discourses on students' progression

Kristen Allen

The University of Newcastle

"You're a dumb electrician...you're not an academic. You can't do this..."

"I was so paranoid I was going to come in here as the bottom of the ladder, the oldest, the stupidest, the slowest..."

"Your teachers are going to think you're stupid..."

The above quotes, spoken by students enrolled in an enabling program, highlight a key theme emerging from my doctoral research on enabling students' perceptions of success. Many students are entering higher education embodying feelings of deficiency, fear for their 'worth' within the institution, shame for their circumstances, or notions of individual blame.

Where are these ideas coming from? Why are students experiencing 'paranoia' regarding their place within the institution, or feeling shame of their background? What is the effect of this on students' progression and what can we do about it as enabling educators?

This interactive presentation interrogates individually directed impressions of blame and shame that many students bring to their enabling program. Beginning with a brief analysis of language in equity policy, and drawing on research from Burke (2012), I propose that descriptions of enabling students as 'non'-traditional and who 'lack' the formal entry requirements, reinforces deficit framings and serves to normalise ideas about the traditional 'type' of student who belongs in higher education.

Participants will be challenged to consider our role as enabling educators. Is it our priority to help students 'improve' and adapt to dominant, neoliberal frameworks, or are the recognised markers of success within these frameworks, such as grades and completions, undermining learning processes and self-confidence? As an equity program, I propose that we have a duty to 'push back' against normalising discourses and find more space in our curriculum to value 'other' aspirations and notions of success, such as making a difference within community, and learning for learning's sake (Allen, 2020).

SESSION 11C

From base to campus: The role of enabling pedagogy to foster veteran engagement with higher learning

Dr Matthew Norris, Ms Jane Habner, Dr Kung-Keat Teoh

Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching, Flinders University

Veterans face many challenges when transitioning from military service to civilian life, including unemployment, physical and mental health rehabilitation, and a changing social context (Albertson, 2019). Higher education provides a valuable pathway to support this transition through further skills development, flexible study arrangements, and an environment that emphasises personal, social, and professional growth (Andrewartha & Harvey, 2018). While several Australian universities are beginning to address the needs of student veterans through local recognition of prior learning frameworks, referral to support services, and financial assistance opportunities (Wadham et al., 2021), there are few entry pathway programs designed and implemented to support veterans as prospective university learners.

In this presentation, we describe our approach to supporting veteran transition through a university entry pathway program that is accessible to all veterans. Our program is designed to prompt recognition of the many skills that veterans bring to a higher education context; to encourage a developing sense of capability and belonging to university culture; and to empower veterans to make informed decisions about university study and its suitability as a transition pathway for them. We argue that veteran students have a distinct set of barriers to engagement with higher education opportunities, which can be addressed through developing veteran-specific approaches to enabling pedagogy. Further, our approach to veteran support is contrasted with that of our broader enabling program to emphasise how the veteran context is similar yet critically different to other enabling student populations.

Albertson, K. (2019). Relational legacies impacting on veteran transition from military to civilian life: trajectories of acquisition, loss, and reformulation of a sense of belonging. *Illness, Crisis & Loss*, 27 (4), 255–273.

Andrewartha, L., and Harvey, A. (2019). Supporting military veterans in Australian higher education. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, 4 (1), 94–109.

Wadham, B., et al. (2021). Australian universities and educational equity for student veterans. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Curtin University, Australia.

SESSION 11D

'I hear you': using 'rainy day' student queries and errors to improve the languages of instruction'

Dr. Paul 'Nazz' Oldham

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

This presentation outlines the process and findings of an action research project undertaken to investigate the challenge of attempting to assuage new foundation studies university students' sense of confusion early in their academic journey. The action research redesigned aspects of curriculum from 2018 to 2020 with the aim of creating a smoother and happier early experience for the practical academic literacies and writing course, Communication For Academic Purposes, run internally and externally at UniSA College, and delivered to approximately 850 students a year. Using the student voice as a guide, the most frequent student queries made in the first two weeks of the course were compiled and organised into the nine questions. A strategic approach was then taken to strengthen the language of instruction in these weeks to improve student retention, engagement, and confidence. The research was informed by rich discussions with the College's collaborative multi-disciplinary team and chaired by Emeritus Professor Robert Hattam of UniSA Education Futures. The theorising that drove the project rested heavily on an enabling education pedagogy focussing on ethos of care and 'care-fullness'; inclusive approaches; critical reflexivity; careful scaffolding; active democratic participation; and the development of a sense of hope through problem-solving. The results over the three phases of the research are analysed for hard and soft student outcomes. I argue that the action research process enabled pedagogical rethinking and change which led to improved student learning and engagement.

SESSION 11E

Visualising Enabling curriculum OR how to (also) teach critical pedagogy when primarily asked to teach mechanics of academic writing

Dr Dino Murtic

UniSA College, Education Futures, University of South Australia

The Academic Year of 2023 would mark the beginning of overpriced degrees related to arts and social sciences. Hence, the practical, critical, and imaginative potential of arts are at the fringe of the consciousness amongst the profit oriented political agencies (Hattam, 2020), which are insisting that the 'skill of the day' is what should matter most in Australian HE curriculum. Students who are entering the HE arenas through Enabling pathways are also impacted with these changes, as fewer of them would venture to choose the costly degrees or courses that are strategically marginalised by educational and political establishments. Consequently, the designers and executives of Enabling spaces may begin to further downgrade courses and pathways relevant to arts and/or social sciences (Edwards & Ritchie, 2022).

In an ideal setting, nevertheless, curriculum design and its fundamental graduate outcome, should be a balancing act between abstract concepts, aural and lived experiences (Stiegler, 2014; Mróz, 2021). The benefit of the arts is in their aesthetic and bodily elements, which bear a capacity to enable students to rediscover lived experiences and/or imagine alternatives. Hence, and despite, the arts! There is a hope is that the day will come when socially engaged artistic practices would become common signifiers in just curricula that prioritise equity and inclusion. Until that moment comes, there are still possibilities for embedding artistic imaginary in a curriculum that is seemingly artless. For instance, an educator, who teaches the mechanics of academic research and writing in Enabling setting, could use opening scenes of a socially engaged feature film when teaching about the effective writing strategies for introducing segments of an academic essay or report. Eventually, the content and seductiveness of visual narrative may encourage students to gaze further into the visual narrative and eventually reflect upon their, and the existence of the others, in a lived society.

SESSION 12A

Study Preparation, Job-Ready Graduates funding and the value of embedded support

Associate Professor Suzi Syme; Dr Stuart Levy; Mr George Lambrinidis

Southern Cross University, SCU College, Federation University Australia, Institute of Education, Arts and Community, Charles Darwin University, College of Indigenous Futures, Education & the Arts

This study focused on how three Australian enabling programs provide embedded support in their curriculum and pedagogy to prepare novice, non-traditional students to successfully transition into undergraduate studies. It emerged from the current nine Australian universities Benchmarking Project and entailed a rigorous comparison and evaluation of the study preparation component in three of the programs. The benefits of external benchmarking are well recognised and include improvements to practice (Sadler, 2013).

One aim of this study was to identify the extent of common content, learning outcomes, pedagogy and standards of student achievement across three programs developed in different parts of Australia in the absence of a national enabling framework. Another was to demonstrate how the explicit teaching of non-cognitive skills in the study preparation subject added value to the student experience.

Each author experienced participation in this project as a validation of the integrity of their programs' content and practices through the building of an active community of practice (Wenger, 1998). A key outcome was a shift in practice as a direct result of the collaborative, collegial and reflective practice established over 18 months. One program that had delivered the content in an intensive orientation determined it would be more engaging and beneficial to students as a core subject.

Our findings revealed that the subjects shared common content, pedagogy, and standards of student achievement. Each subject used a strengths-based approach to help students identify skills they bring to university and how they can translate these into an academic context (O'Shea, 2015). Instead of seeing students through a deficit lens (Fox, 1997), our subjects focus on embedding skills acquisition in meaningful and authentic in-class and online activities and assessments. High subject evaluations indicate students recognise the value of learning these skills.

Australian government funding changed in 2022 with the Job-Ready Graduates (JRG) policy so that students who fail more than 50% of their subjects lose Commonwealth supported funding. The experience of enabling students suggests that learning these non-cognitive skills would be beneficial for all students commencing higher education.

SESSION 12B

Where do they come from? Why are they here? Narrative discourse on access to enabling programs.

Trixie James

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Within the Australian higher education context, enabling programs (also known as access, pre-tertiary, preparatory, bridging programs) were introduced as a second chance opportunity for non-traditional students to gain the required skills to successfully transition into higher education. Access to higher education has been prioritised on the political agenda due to the discrepancy of under-represented societal groups that are unable to access university education. Although there has been improvement in accessibility, a higher education degree is still on the periphery for many people who do not have the financial or cultural capacity to transition to university. This paper forms part of a Doctoral study investigating the student experience through an enabling program. The pre-entry interview asked students to share their background educational experiences and the reasons they chose to enter an enabling program prior to enrolling in university. The findings, presented as narratives, express the individual's story, and offers insight into their pathway prior to university. Narrative Inquiry affords the opportunity to understand the phenomenon of access to university as it allows the person living the experience to share and convey their own personal experience by telling their story. The discussion further interrogates these stories applying Bourdieu's theory of capital to illuminate what this means in today's cultural climate (Bourdieu, 1991; Bunn et al., 2020). Bourdieu (1974, p. 32) observed that "education is not necessarily a 'liberating force' or 'a means of increasing social mobility', instead it can be one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern as it provides an apparent justification for social inequalities and gives recognition to the cultural heritage". Yet, even with the most recent massification policies and reforms which are supporting more equity-based students to enter university, there is scope to reduce the socioeconomic inequalities of access to higher education and build stronger awareness around students' transition experiences into higher education.

SESSION 12C

Life-Ready' pathways through Enabling education

Dr Bronwyn Relf, Dr Jennifer Irwin, Ms Catherine Burgess

Pathways and Academic Learning Support, The University of Newcastle

Enabling programs prepare students for success in their higher education studies. For many years the Open Foundation program at The University of Newcastle (UON) has provided support for people from the Newcastle, Hunter and Central Coast region communities wishing to gain access to higher education and improve their career path.

The curriculum design of the Open Foundation program is unique within the Enabling sector, embedding the development of academic literacy, study, numeracy and computing skills in discipline-specific courses aligned with undergraduate degrees offered by the relevant UON Colleges.

This paper presents the findings of a thematic analysis of focus group transcripts from 11 former Open Foundation students currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree at UON. Participants shared why they engaged with Open Foundation prior to undergraduate enrolment, how they perceived the value of their Open Foundation program and how the courses they completed in Open Foundation prepared them for undergraduate study. Factors that influenced their undergraduate degree choice, the importance of program cost and the impact their Open Foundation experience had on their engagement and participation in the wider community were explored.

The findings will be discussed in terms of the relevance of the curriculum design of Open Foundation when preparing students for undergraduate studies at UON, the recently introduced Job Ready Graduate Legislation and the importance of the continued inclusion of Enabling programs in the allocation of Commonwealth supported places to universities.

SESSION 12D

The Regional Student Experience and School-University Partnerships: a critical inquiry into the impact of enacting care-ful pedagogies

Ms Sharron Jones

Education Futures, University of South Australia

Relationships, including those with children and young people, families and community, colleagues and site leaders, and the wider regional populace, are important when living and working as a teacher in a regional location. Who you know, who knows you, and your reputation as a teacher and a person matters. In our regional community, there is one university campus, multiple childcare and preschool sites, primary and secondary schools, and several multi-faceted education sites that encompass the public, Catholic and Independent school sectors. This is where we live and work; where knowing and being connected to the community matters when it comes to building school-university partnerships.

Green, Eady and Tindall-Ford (2020) describe school-university partnerships as operating in the 'third space' where the domains of school and university intersect; they are intentional, deliberate, collaborative, and non-hierarchical in nature (p, 13). In our regional community these domains are located side-by-side, both geographically and conceptually; and seek to enhance the teaching and learning experience for children and young people, and the collegial and pedagogic experience for pre-service, supervising and university teachers through genuine, reciprocated relationships.

This study seeks to inhabit the third space and explore how pedagogies of care improve school-university connections for children and young people, enhance the learning and placement experiences of pre-service teachers, expand the professional knowledge and practice of supervising teachers, and enable a university teacher's currency and practice in both the school and university domains. Motta and Bennett (2018) describe these pedagogies of care as: recognition, dialogic relationality, and affective and embodied praxis (p, 632). This pedagogy of care is central to the success of the school-university partnership supporting Walker and Gleaves (2016) who describe it as "the active fostering of and maintenance of pedagogic relationships above all else" (p, 1).

Employing Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis' work on narrative portraiture (1997) as a method of inquiry that "captures and explain[s] the ever-changing complexities of life and experience [by] tell[ing] a story in such vivid detail that the event[s] could be pictured as though it [they] were a painting" (p, 4); this study will capture and tell the stories of the school-university experiences of children and young people, pre-service, supervising and university teachers; and paint a picture of "both personal and professional connections" within our regional community (Burton & Johnson, 2010, p, 378).

Burton, M. & Johnson, S.A. (2010). "Where else would we teach?": Portraits of Two Teachers in the Rural South. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(4), 376-386. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0022487110372362>

Green, C.A., Eady, M.J., Tindall-Ford, S.K. (2020). "I Think That's My Job": What Motivates Teachers to Partner with Teacher Educators in ITE?. In: Fox, J., Alexander, C., Aspland, T. (eds) *Teacher Education in Globalised Times*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-4124-7_13

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & David, J.H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Motta, S. C., & Bennett, A. (2018). Pedagogies of care, care-full epistemological practice and 'other' caring subjectivities in enabling education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(5), 631-646.

Walker, C., & Gleaves, A. (2016). Constructing the caring higher education teacher: A theoretical framework. *Teaching and teacher education*, 54, 65-76.

KEYNOTE SESSION

Heads and Friends of Enabling

Considering the conference theme 'Reimagining enabling in higher education', panellists will be prompted to discuss their own vision for the enabling sector and the goals the sector and its people need to prioritise for the security and sustainability of enabling programs.

SESSION CHAIR



Conjoint Associate Professor Cathy Stone

University of Newcastle

Cathy is a consultant and researcher in higher education student success and a Conjoint Associate Professor with the University of Newcastle. For more than 30 years Cathy has been closely involved in the development and provision of strategies to enhance student equity in higher education, widen participation and improve the experience and outcomes for increasingly diverse student cohorts, both in the on-campus and online environments. For the past 15 years she has been an active researcher, publishing extensively in the areas of mature-age, first-in-family and online, distance students.

Cathy has been a passionate supporter of enabling education since she first joined the University of Newcastle as a counsellor, where she encountered many inspirational stories of student access, participation and success as a direct result of enabling programs. This inspired her doctoral research that examined the experience of mature age students who had entered university via an enabling program. More recently, in 2020 Cathy chaired the external review panel for the University of Newcastle's suite of enabling programs.

As an inaugural Equity Fellow with the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, following her work with Open Universities Australia, Cathy developed Guidelines for Improving Student Outcomes in Online Learning (Stone, 2017) which have been of particular relevance since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, helping to inform the HE sector during its rapid transition to online learning delivery.

Cathy is a Lifetime Member and Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA) and an AASW (Australian Association of Social Workers) accredited mental health social worker. For further information and details of publications see <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/profile/cathy-stone>

PANELLISTS



Associate Professor Anna Bennett

Director Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre, University of Newcastle

Associate Professor Anna Bennett is Director of the Pathways and Academic Learning Support (PALS) Centre at the University of Newcastle, NSW, which provides higher education pathways, preparation programs and learning support for over 16,000 domestic and international students every year. For almost 50 years, the PALS Centre has offered the largest and oldest open-access, free university pathways in the country. Dr Bennett has a Phd in Sociology (UNSW) and her research explores higher education pathways, transitions, equity programs and their evaluation, and the policies which shape them. She develops approaches that include collaborations with industry partners from a diversity of businesses, organisations and other educational providers, to ensure program reach and student support (including significant industry supported pathway scholarships).

Anna's total funding is \$886,464 (11 grants) in the field of pathways and equity, with the majority competitive commissioned grants (HERD C). Anna led the Equity Initiatives Framework (EIF), a national review of access and equity program impact drawn on by many universities to guide and evaluate their access, transition and equity programs for over 7 years.

Dr Bennett is on the Editorial board of the Q1 journal Teaching in Higher Education, has produced 73 publications, scholarly papers and media in the field, and is an executive member of the National Association of Enabling Educators Australia (NAEEA). She is committed to contributing to the development of colleagues across the sector as NAEEA Research Development Special Interest Group and national writing programme co-facilitator.



Professor Sharron King

Dean of Programs, UniSA College, University of South Australia

Professor Sharron King (PhD) is the Dean of Programs (UniSA College): Education Futures at the University of South Australia with a long history of senior leadership, research and innovation in improving educational outcomes for both academic staff and students. Her research interests focus primarily on students' transition to university, as well as student health and well-being and widening access to university for students who face educational disadvantage. In 2021 she was the CI on a NCSEHE funded grant investigating the key barriers inhibiting regional students from undertaking higher education.

Previous grants include a National Priority Pool grant to enhance the academic success and wellbeing of regional students and a NCSEHE grant exploring first-in-family students experience at university.

Outcomes from these collaborative projects include resources which have led to changes in the ways that universities support students' transition to university. Resources such as the information guides for both regional and first in family students and their families on what to expect at university, along with guidelines for academics and support staff on how best to support non-traditional students entering university have helped to improve the retention, success and wellbeing of commencing students.



Professor Karen Nelson

Provost, University of Southern Queensland

Karen commenced at UniSQ in February 2019 in the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). In January 2022, Karen was appointed to the position of Provost. Prior to joining UniSQ, she was Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) and in this role she was responsible for transforming USC's approach to student learning engagement, success and retention. Previously, Professor Nelson was Director of Student Success and Retention, and Director of First Year Experience and held a series of traditional faculty-based academic roles at the Queensland University of Technology.

A recognised authority in student engagement and retention and first-year experience, Professor Nelson's research into the complex nature of the student experience has been instrumental in uncovering the factors influencing attrition and has advanced policy and practice nationally and internationally. Her contributions to higher education have been recognised by three national awards and in 2016 she was made Principal Fellow of the UK based Higher Education Academy.

Professor Nelson is the chief editor of Student Success, an open access journal exploring the experiences of students in tertiary education. She has been a member of the organising committee, Chair or Co-chair of the annual Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention & Success (STARS) Conference (and its predecessor FYHE conferences) for more than 12 years. Professor Nelson also serves the sector as an external expert for the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).



Professor Thomas Roche

*Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Quality) & Dean SCU College
Southern Cross University*

Thomas leads the University's strategic initiatives relating to the enhancement of education quality. He ensures that the University delivers an inspired experience supporting students reach their potential. As Dean, SCU College he leads staff in providing pathway and cross curriculum academic support for the University's students. The College provides University admission to applicants who do not meet standard entry requirements and are often from identified equity groups (e.g., low socio-economic status, regional and remote students) and international students on English for Academic Purposes pathways. He is a specialist in the design, delivery and management of higher education courses and pathways, empowering students to gain access to and succeed in university study. His primary research interests are in applied linguistics (Academic Literacies, English for Academic Purposes) and curriculum design. For more information visit: https://scu.esploro.exlibrisgroup.com/esploro/profile/thomas_roche/overview?institution=61SCU_INST



President NAEAA, Karen Seary

*Associate Dean, School of Access Education
Central Queensland University*

Karen Seary is the Associate Dean, School of Access Education at CQUniversity. The School hosts CQUniversity's Enabling course, the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS) and the academic learning support services offered to higher education and vocational education students by the Academic Learning Centre and the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Centre. Karen's research interests centre on adult education, transformative learning and transition pedagogy. Karen was recently recognised as a national champion for change by the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) and Equity Partners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA), as part of the World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED). This award recognises and celebrates the life changing work of student equity practitioners across the world in supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds, into and through higher education. Karen holds a Diploma of Teaching (Secondary), Bachelor of Education and Master of Education (Guidance and Counselling). Karen is currently the Chair of the National Association of Enabling Educators Australia (NAEEA).

POSTERS

POSTER 01

Developing critical thinking skills in pre-tertiary students through the implementation of a critical reflection journal.

Trixie James, Katrina Johnston

School of Access Education, CQUniversity

Critical thinking is an implicit but necessary skill for university students to demonstrate higher order thinking. However, it is often not an academic skillset that is explicitly taught. This notion is a concern for adults who are entering university through an enabling program as they often present with lower-level academic skills and do not understand what it means to be a critical thinker, nor how to apply these skills. Lai (2011) and Halpern (1998) suggests that many adults fail to think critically in many situations, and this is supported by Gelder (2005) who concludes that many adults also lack basic reasoning skills. This poster presentation will introduce a critical reflection journal (CRJ) that was developed and piloted in the STEPS enabling course. The impetus for the development of the CRJ was the recognition that many of our students did not understand how to apply critical thinking skills. Using the Review, Connect, Extend, Apply (RCEA) (James, 2015) framework, students are taught how to pose questions to themselves in order to critically reflect on the content being taught. The RCEA was developed using the principles that form both Adult Learning Principles (Knowles, 1998) and Brain Based Learning Principles (Caine & Caine, 2014). The 4 steps of the RCEA guide students through the initial read and review stage helping to comprehend the basic message being imparted. Next, students are encouraged to connect what they have learnt to some aspect of their lives. Then the students are actively encouraged to be curious through further research, whilst the final step encourages them to apply what they are learning to their own life journey. A pilot study was undertaken and it was found that there were definite improvements in the students ability to reflect critically if they used the CRJ in the way it was intended (Armstrong & James, 2018). This poster will present the CRJ, explain the theory behind its creation, and allow interested parties to freely access this resource to use as a pedagogical tool in their own learning environments.

POSTER 02

Fun and Games with Zoom – How introducing old-fashioned games into an online tutorial changed the dynamic and engaged students in the content by stimulating connections and changing the power ratio

Katrina Johnston

CQUniversity

The Problem: How do we engage students and teach them computing skills and knowledge through an online learning interface such as Zoom? The Computing Skills for University Unit in the Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies program at CQUniversity teaches basic computing skills needed to format essays, reports, slide presentations and spreadsheets using the Microsoft Office suite. However, with the COVID-19 lockdown requiring a transition to online learning, there was concern about how best to engage students in this online environment. Using my Digital Media background, I developed games to generate a fun and enjoyable learning experience whilst teaching the skills taught in the unit that week. When compared to more traditional pedagogical practices, games enhance “conceptual knowledge by 11%” and “learning retention by 90%” (Designing Digitally, 2019). There are many advantages that emerge from using games in adult pedagogy: improving engagement, developing group dynamics, delivering instant feedback, inspiring learners, promoting social connection, strengthening learning, and improving problem solving skills (Zurakowski 2020, Designing Digitally 2019). Anecdotally, using this game-based pedagogical approach changed the pedagogy dynamic from grade-based to game-participation. As Meyers (2016) suggests, this can help students who are not grade oriented to retain more information and apply what they have learned to future tasks. A series of digital board-games were created using the software that the students were learning that week and had the twofold purpose of teaching them computing skills whilst also showing them how those same skills could be used within the applications to create a variety of different resources. The resulting games were Shortcut Bingo, Trivial Pursuit, Shortcut Lava and Find-A-Word created using Microsoft Word; Shortcuts Hangman style in PowerPoint; Connect four, Exopoly, and Snakes and Ladders in Excel. These games helped engage the students and they looked forward to coming to class and interacting over an online platform. Interactive games may be the bridge that empowers students’ confidence in the online context.

POSTER 03

Enabling practice and pedagogy: Embedding peer learning support within the classroom

Ms Jann Roberts, Mr Byron Frencham, Dr Henry Lee

UOW College Australia

The UOW College Australia (UOWCA) Peer Learning Support Program has been in place since 2008. Since then, it has gradually morphed to suit the needs of the domestic and international students in the College enabling courses, and has developed into three major forms of support. In 2015, the Peer Learning Program Co-ordinator introduced the second of these, Peer Assisted Tutorials (PATs), after being inspired by a conference presentation by a practitioner from Victoria University. PATs comprise Peer Learning staff, referred to as Peer Assistant Tutors, attending tutorial classes, in order to assist the teacher to assist the students in doing tutorial exercises. When COVID-19 struck in February 2020 most, if not all, Australian students and teachers were quite suddenly thrust into an online learning environment. Consequently, some quite rapid corresponding changes had to be made to the Peer Learning support, in order to help ameliorate the impact on both students and teachers. The poster will document the changes within the UOWCA Peer Learning Program since 2015, with a focus on how student learning and teacher support have been successfully embedded within classrooms: both in lectures and tutorials. This embedded learning support is underpinned by socio-constructivist theories of learning. A snapshot of existing research in the field of peer-led support, in the enabling space, will be included. The key aims of the poster will be to document the processes that took place, the challenges that were faced, the positive outcomes, and several comments from the staff involved.

POSTER 04

No Assumptions: Know your cohort – Constructing a student profile for a fully-online pathways course for prospective nursing, midwifery and allied health students

Dr Jennifer Irwin, Mr Jeremy Jackson

Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre, University of Newcastle

The Open Foundation Program at the University of Newcastle (UON) is flexible in nature with students selecting 40 units of study to be completed over a period of one to four consecutive semesters. Students may choose subjects covering a broad range of discipline interests that aim to embed the development of academic, literacy and study skills within the context of an area of interest. Students may engage with the program via face-to-face, online or a blended mode to best suit their circumstances. Completion is recognised with a Certificate of Attainment, guaranteed entry to selected degrees at UON, and a selection rank that may be used for applications via the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC).

The careful design of enabling courses is of utmost importance and crucial to student success. Enabling cohorts are heterogeneous in nature and this student diversity presents a challenge when producing learning materials. Universal design and community of inquiry theories were adopted in the production of a fully online, university-entry course designed for students wishing to gain entry to undergraduate health courses, particularly nursing and midwifery.

Demographic information for the initial student cohort was collated and student perception of the course design surveyed. The data collected identified areas of commonality and difference between this initial online cohort, their on-campus colleagues and students studying other STEM courses within the program.

This course has been delivered online within the Open Foundation program for a further three years. The confirmed student diversity and their feedback suggests that the design considerations undertaken were appropriate. It is hoped that the provision of access in an online mode continues to benefit students who are time poor and/or geographically distant from the two university campuses. This outcome aligns with the enabling philosophy of the Open Foundation Program specifically the concept of widening participation.



*Program subject to minor change, current at time of printing.

