Australasian Association for Institutional Research

From the President's Desk

by Dave Marr

Firstly let me say 'thank you' to the 109 people who responded to our "What's in a Name" survey. The size of this response means that the results of the survey can be seen as a good representative sample of the membership. The Committee really wanted to test the mood of the broader IR, higher education community for a name change and I believe this survey has allowed us to do just that.

So what did the results show? In summary:

- 60% of respondents were against changing the name. However that does mean that 40% of respondents considered a name change a reasonable idea;

- The reasons for not changing included: it's a well-known brand in Australia; it's affiliation with other international bodies is invaluable; it's costly to rebadge; no real grounds for change offered by the Committee; "if it ain't broke, then don't fix it"; and my favourite, "Cos you'll just end up changing it back";

- ~50 alternative organisational names were suggested;

- Almost 70% of respondents felt that adding a tag-line would be a good idea; and

- ~70 suggestions of an appropriate tag-line were proffered.

Despite there being a majority of respondents opting to keep the current name, there was a proportion of respondents who would consider a name change as a good idea. It was therefore a useful exercise even if only to reaffirm our membership's view whilst gauging some discontent. We should be doing this every few years is the lesson I learned from this.

How the AAIR Executive Committee will respond to these results will be discussed at the next committee meeting on 3 September and their decisions will be circulated in due course. If you have any further comments you'd wish the Committee to consider, please email me at president@aair.org.au prior to the September meeting.
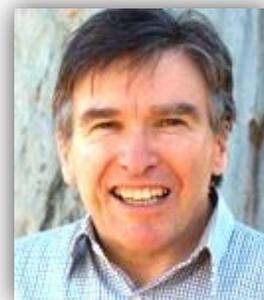
Also at that meeting we'll be reviewing reports from the working parties on our three-month strategic projects and considering three new projects for the final quarter of the year.

The 2015 AAIR SIG Forum has just been held on Fraser Island and from all reports it has been another successful program for all who participated. A big 'thank you' must go to Togamau Te'o and his team from the University of Southern Queensland who have done such an outstanding job in delivering this Forum.

Work is continuing on preparations for the Annual Forum to be held in Wellington. The program is looking fantastic with some great keynote speakers and a panel session that is shaping up to be one of the best we've had. So make sure you register asap as Early Bird closes on 28 August!

On the Committee front, Michael Cudmore has had to stand down for personal reasons from the Committee as well as Chair of the Load Management SIG. Michael, in his relatively short time on the Committee, showed himself to be a great contributor always coming forward with challenging ideas and with a selfless commitment to AAIR. His clear thinking will be sadly missed. I'm sure though that we'll still see Michael at AAIR events in the future. The Committee is therefore looking for a new Chair for the Load Management SIG. If you are interested in taking on this role, please let me know at president@aair.org.au.

Dave Marr
President

Registrations for the 26th Annual AAIR Forum

On behalf of the Australasian Association for Institutional Research (AAIR) Forum Organising Committee, we would like to extend a warm invitation to you to participate in this year's 26th AAIR Annual Forum.

It's been 16 years since the Forum has been across the Tasman to Australia's easterly neighbour, so we're well and truly overdue for a visit. If you haven't been to either Wellington or New Zealand, then you're in for a wonderful surprise. Lonely Planet named Wellington, 'the coolest little capital in the world', and it certainly lives up to that claim. Nestled between a sparkling harbour and rolling green hills (at least in November), New Zealand's capital city is renowned for its arts, heritage, culture and natural beauty.

Registrations and accommodation bookings are now open.

Program

Please see our Forum Program for latest program updates.

This year's Theme: The Winds of Change

It seems only fitting then that this year's theme is "The Winds of Change". If there's one thing that higher education has in common across the globe is that 'change' is the new norm whether that's because of

changes in government policy or radical improvements to technology. Institutional researchers are more often these days being asked to lead the institution's response to these changed environments. Our skills help us to meet these challenges and AAIR plays an important part in developing those skills and your knowledge.
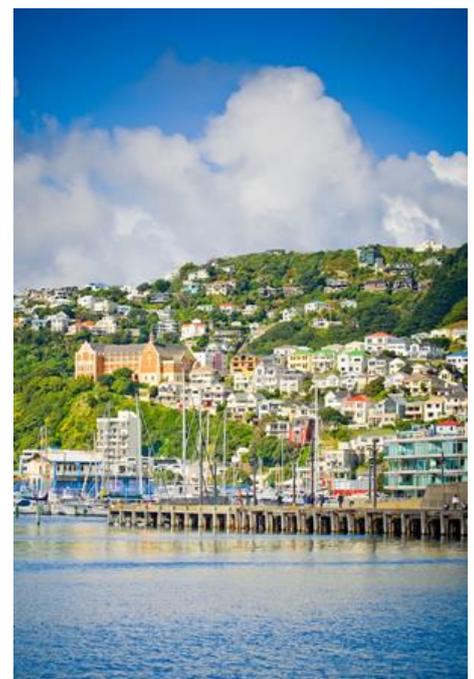
Forum themes include:

- Benchmarking for Continuous Quality Improvement
- Informing Learning and Teaching through Evaluation and Surveys
- Closing the Loop – Putting Evidence into Practice
- Influencing Change through Information and Evaluation
- Modelling the Implications of Change
- Looking forward, looking back, new horizons
- Compliance and Government Reporting
- Planning, Policy and Positioning
- Business Intelligence and Analytics

Introducing our Key Note Speakers:

Stephen Few founded Perceptual Edge in 2003. With 30 years of experience as an innovator, consultant, and educator in the fields of business intelligence and information design, Stephen is now a leading expert in data visualization for sensemaking and communication.

Steve Maharey is the Vice-Chancellor of Massey University. He was the Member of Parliament for Palmerston North from 1990-2008 and a Senior Cabinet Minister from 1999-2008. Earlier in his career he was a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and a Junior Lecturer in Business Administration His main areas of academic interest include social policy (particularly social development), education, media and cultural studies, social change and politics.

Higher Education@home

by Louise Hargreaves

Higher Education Reform

1. Universities face accountability for bad student debt. Vice-Chancellors have been told that it is inevitable they will be made accountable for the bad debts of their graduates as the price of any freedom to charge high fees. Education Minister Christopher Pyne is considering options to make universities more accountable if their graduates default on their loan repayments.

2. The Greens won't cap free places. The Greens have no plan to cap student numbers as part of their free tertiary education policy and instead are looking to tax increases on mining, big business and the wealthy to pay for it. The Greens launched their campaign for free higher education in early August to refocus opposition to the government's stalled bid to deregulate university fees, which is designed to make up for a proposed 20 per cent cut to teaching subsidies and help fund expansion of government-supported places to dip-lomas.

3. Key adviser warns against 'open slather' for private higher education providers. Influential higher education consultant David Phillips has warned of "a very large moral hazard" in the federal government's university deregulation package which Education Minister Christopher Pyne is still pushing to pass in the Senate. Mr Phillips, who Mr Pyne brought in to advise on the reforms before they were rejected by Senate in March, singled out private higher education providers, saying they should not have open access to government student subsidies and the HECS loan system.

4. A former senior Canberra bureaucrat who helped craft the Abbott government's higher education reforms says they don't fix any of the major problems in the system and potentially make them worse. Mark Warburton, who led the higher education funding branch in the Department of Education while the university reform package, including student fee deregulation, was put together last year, said there was a simple and fair alternative, which would cap cost increases to students.

5. An ABC review raises concerns about coverage of higher education debate. The ABC has vowed to take a more "thoughtful" approach to policy coverage following the release of an audit criticising some of its journalists for inappropriate editorialising in their reporting on the Abbott government's plan to deregulate university fees.

Higher Education Funding

6. Modifying student loan system could ensure access for all students [opinion]. When HECS (HELP) was introduced in 1989 it applied only to undergraduates in public sector universities. We illustrate that, with thoughtful variations in design and collection rules, the loan system could be modified in a way that would preserve the insurance features of income-contingent loans that facilitate participation, individual affordability and equity.

7. Britain has cut funding for its student expansion agenda just as it was poised to follow Australia and uncap university places. The move has sparked warnings that in the absence of an increase in government funding student fees will have to rise or numbers will have to be recapped. And with the present policy impasse in Australia, experts say the federal government may be left with no option but to use its executive powers to freeze outlays on existing university funding agreements, effectively capping funding if not enrolments.

8. A proposal to redirect 30 per cent of government funding for teaching into a central pool for research has been met with howls of protest, with one university head describing the idea as "an entirely cynical cash grab". The idea, proposed by Peter Hoj, head of the University of Queensland, would see 30 per cent of commonwealth grant scheme money, presently valued at $7 billion, redirected to a central competitive pot in research block grants.

9. Call to reduce HECS payback threshold. Repayment thresholds on HECS loans need to be reduced by at least $10,000 and as much as $45,000 as worsening graduate employment and stagnant wages have resulted in a blowout in the number of students who never fully repay their loans. More than 1.8 million students owed the government money under the Higher Education Loan Program in 2013, compared with 1.2 million in 2006.

Policy Watch

10. The Medical Research Future Fund a signature initiative of the Coalition's first budget that Treasurer Joe Hockey hoped would help find cures for cancer and dementia — has finally passed the Senate, despite the government's dumping the GP co-payment that had been designed to bankroll it. The MRFF now will be funded through reduced health spending and about $1 billion left over from the Health and Hospitals Fund designed by the Rudd government to upgrade health infrastructure, until its balance reaches $20bn in 2020.

11. Submissions open for Review of Australia's Research Training System Call for input: The Australian Council of Learned Academics (ACOLA) has announced a call for written submissions to the Review of Australia's Research Training System. Submissions can be made online through a dedicated website. The call for submissions is open until 11.59pm AEST **Monday 31 August 2015**. The submission process will provide a fundamental basis for the review, and inform public consultations to be undertaken later in 2015.

12. The federal government's review of research training has floated the idea of linking funding for research higher degree students to performance, such as the time taken to complete a PhD, completion rates, graduate outcomes and student satisfaction. The discussion paper released by the Australian Council of Learned Academies, which is overseeing the review, noted that in Britain the Economic and Social Research Council cuts doctorate funding to universities that fail to achieve a four-years-to-completion rate of at least 60 per cent.

13. Issues paper for the Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements. The Review, led by Dr Ian Watt AO and supported by an expert working group, developed an issues paper to stimulate discussion on how to capitalise on the high quality and excellent research of Australian universities and translate it into economic advantage. The deadline for submissions is **5 pm AEST, Friday, 18 September 2015.**

14. Education agents have spoken out against Australia's Streamlined Visa Processing system, saying it is neither faster nor more dependable for visa issuance. They have cautiously welcomed the recent announcement that the system will be scrapped starting next year but say it's too early to tell if it will be an improvement.

15. The Australian government has expanded the number of grants awarded for 2016 through its New Colombo Plan and announced three new initiatives to increase opportunities for students in business. Following a successful two-year pilot programme that funded study and work abroad placements for more than 4,500 Australian students, the NCP will up the number of student mobility grants offered to students travelling to 28 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

Graduate Outcomes

16. Three year out graduate labour market stable. There has been much comment this year on the bad and getting worse employment outcomes for recent graduates. This is based on a four months after completion survey, so some of the result is slower rather than non-transitions into full-time employment. The latest Beyond Graduation survey looks at graduates three years after completing their degree.

Credentialing

17. Universities explore credit options for online learning courses. Universities are now exploring options to give students credit for MOOCs. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) of the Australian National, University Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, is lobbying Australia's state-based school assessment authorities to accredit the university's Astrophysics MOOC, taught by Nobel Laureate and Vice Chancellor-to-be Brian Schmidt. This would make the course count towards a school student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) - (The ANU already awards credit for students doing its course online). The sector is watching closely.

18. An opinion piece appeared in *The Conversation* shortly after the MOOCs for credit ANU article (above) expressing concerns over MOOCs being used as formal credit for high school. The Author concludes that until such time as the courses available through MOOCs provide more certainty that students have effectively learned what was intended for them to learn, MOOCs provide great content but have questionable value beyond that.

19. Deakin University eyes use of badging for credit. An Australian university with an international online student body expects to begin accepting digital badging in 2016 that could reduce the amount of time required for people to obtain their master's degrees in IT. The announcement, which involves Deakin University, actually came from its wholly-owned subsidiary, DeakinDigital. The latter offers an alternative to higher education by assessing professionals and granting them credentials based on what they know.

Student Recruitment

20. Record higher education student enrolments in 2014. Minister for Education and Training, Christopher Pyne MP, has welcomed the release of higher education student data showing a record number of students in 2014. The Selected *Higher Education Statistics 2014 Student Data – Full Year* publication shows 1,373,230 students were enrolled in higher education in 2014, up 4.5 per cent on 2013.

21. Why a low ATAR is not the end of the world for students or universities. The Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank or ATAR is a numerical, relative ranking derived from senior high-school performance and a complex series of scaling and other adjustments. We are surrounded by myth and misinformation about this number.

22. The number of indigenous students accepting university places has jumped more than 25 per cent in four years, far outpacing the growth in total student numbers, while the number of offers for admission made by universities has increased almost 40 per cent. The figures, prepared by the Department of Education, show increasing rates of Aboriginal participation in higher education institutions, and come after the federal government removed caps on the number of student places universities can offer.

Research

23. Research Evaluation – an argument for a 'census' driven collection of publications. Research publications are no longer only a mechanism for disseminating research findings but they are now also a measure of research performance. It is hardly surprising then that discussions arising from a recent review by PhillipsKPA are not around whether we should collect research publication data but how we can collect it more efficiently.

24. Young academics (nearly) have more chance of winning Tattslotto than a research grant. The sorry story is that the odds of winning a Discovery Early Career Research Award (DECRA) aren't improving. Third Degree trawled through the Australian Research Council statistics and found that the success rate for applicants over the past four years has hovered around 14 per cent.

25. Research needs Education Investment Fund, says Carr. The $3.9 billion from the now defunct Education Investment Fund should be set aside to cover the capital and ongoing costs of research infrastructure, under a proposal by opposition higher education spokesman Kim Carr. Mr Carr said the money could be used to fund ongoing research infrastructure needs, including the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy, for a decade.

26. Status Report on the NCRIS eResearch capability. This independent technical report on the status of the NCRIS eResearch capability examines a range of questions concerning the development of NCRIS eResearch infrastructure from 2006 to 2014. The report was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training

International Students in Australia

27. Australian education exports reach AUS$18 billion in 2014/15. This represents a 14.2% increase on the AUS$15.9 billion recorded for the previous year, and secures the sector's position as Australia's fourth-largest export industry, after iron ore, coal, and natural gas. It is also the country's leading services export sector, surpassing even Australia's noted tourism industry by several billion dollars.

28. Fewer overseas students drop out. International students are less likely to drop out of the first year of their course compared with local students, that is, those who are Australian citizens or have permanent residency. The latest figures from the Commonwealth Education Department show that in 2014, 14.8 per cent of local students dropped out of the first year of a bachelor degree compared with 9.9 per cent of international students.

29. IELTS examiners may lose jobs as marking goes online. A decision by student services giant IDP Education to mark part of the IELTS English language tests online will force many current examiners out of work. According to a confidential "information pack" circulated to IDP-run testing centres in Australia, the written components of IELTS will be assessed by independent home-based contractors using specially designed "MarkManager" software.

Sector News and Views

30. AFR Higher Education Awards will recognise excellence and achievement. Australia's most prestigious higher education awards have been launched by The Australian Financial Review to recognise the achievements of universities and other higher education providers and the benefits they provide to students. The awards are open to all higher education providers, public and private, and will recognise specific initiatives and strategies put in place by institutions in seven key areas. More details about the awards, including a full list of judging criteria, are available at afrhigheredawards.com.au. Entries close at midnight on September 27, 2015

31. Where do foreign students face the highest University fees? [Infographic]. Studying abroad can prove extremely expensive. Tuition fees vary widely across international universities, as do cost of living expenses. According to HSBC, the United States has the highest average annual fees for international students of any country worldwide – $24,914. Australia isn't too far behind, with its annual university fees adding up to $24,081.

32. Uni drop-out rates show need for more support, not capped enrolments. The latest Selected Higher Education Statistics have revealed an increase in student attrition, or the percentage of students commencing in 2013 who neither completed nor re-enrolled in 2014. It is likely that the demand-driven system has had an effect on attrition rates, as the increase in attrition has come at the same time as an increase in enrolments

33. CQU flags another name change. Central Queensland University is planning a name change, although the new moniker has not yet been revealed. Vice-Chancellor Scott Bowman flagged with staff that a name change and rebrand was under consideration. This would be the sixth change of identity for the institution.

34. Torrens University: present student numbers 'a good size'. Australia's first new university to open in 20 years is operating with little more than 100 students at its main campus in Adelaide, and a further 250 international and local students studying online. The university is owned by the international Laureate group. Vice-Chancellor Justin Beilby said that with the acquisition of the Chifley Business School in early August, Torrens' enrolments would be about 500 students by the end of the year.

35. The Innovative Research Universities network has begun assessing its future direction with disquiet from some members over several issues, including the level of engagement with government. Senior management at Adelaide-based Flinders University has had informal discussions about the value of IRU membership, but no official position has been formed. Sources said an informal process was under way to reflect on membership to the six-member group chaired by Prof John Dewar, VC of La Trobe University.

36. State's rebuff of $4m Lomborg policy centre slammed as 'bizarre'. Tensions have escalated over the possibility of a $4 million policy centre linked to Danish academic Bjorn Lomborg being set up at Flinders University in Adelaide, after the South Australian government opposed it outright on "ideological" grounds. In a series of statements yesterday aimed at the Flinders University Council and the Coalition, the Weatherill government warned Dr Lomborg that he was not welcome in the state as it would damage South Australia's image among the climate change fraternity.

37. Rethinking supervisions for the 21st century. Disruptive shifts emanating from globalisation and emergent technologies are forcing a rethink of traditional approaches to teaching and learning and, importantly, PhD supervision in Australia. A perceived lack of 21st century skills has resulted in reluctance by industry and government to employ PhD graduates.

38. The University of Sydney's prestigious business school may introduce compulsory language courses for foreign students with poor English skills after more than 400 students, mostly from China, failed a core unit of their master's degrees. About 37 per cent of more than 1200 students studying the Critical Thinking in Business course at the business school failed the subject last semester and about 12 per cent of students in the Succeeding in Business course also failed.

39. The University of Canberra is preparing for legal action against the Commonwealth for what it argues is an unlawful cancellation of a $26 million federal grant to set up a Centre for Quality Teaching and Learning.

Rankings, Ratings and Benchmarking

40. Half Australia's unis in world elite as QUT joins top 500 in ARWU. Australia now has more than half its public universities listed in a prestigious international ranking after Queensland University of Technology made the top 500 for the first time. Melbourne University was again named Australia's best university by the Academic Ranking of World Universities, being placed at 44th in the world for a second year in a row. Making up four universities in the top 100, Melbourne was followed by Australian National University and the University of Queensland, both on 77, and the University of Western Australia on 87.

41. The University of New South Wales has set an ambitious goal of being a world top 50 university and will spend an extra $3 billion over the next decade to improve its ranking. Vice-chancellor Ian Jacobs has released a strategy outlining the plan, which includes hiring about 100 more professors and channelling most academic staff into either research or teaching focussed roles to improve efficiency and productivity.

Who's on the Move (or not)?

42. Chief Executive Officer appointed to TEQSA. In late July, the Minister for Education and Training announced the appointment of Mr Anthony McClaran as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). Mr McClaran joins TEQSA from the United Kingdom, where he is currently the CEO of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Mr McClaran will commence his five year term with TEQSA on 12 October 2015.

43. David Thodey to weave magic as CSIRO chairman. He was the saviour of Telstra, the humble chief executive who drove an old Toyota and who said he couldn't justify his massive executive salary in light of humble working wages. Now David Thodey will turn his particular brand of genius to the nation's premier research organisation. Mr Thodey has been appointed for a five-year term as the chairman of the CSIRO.

Tips and Tricks

44. Summary of Academic Dates. Universities Australia maintains information on principal academic dates for all member universities in a central repository. Details on summer teaching have been added where applicable. Where no details are shown for summer, either no formal summer teaching period occurs at that university, or no significant teaching activities take place during this period.

45. Visualising international education data through MIP Orbis. Austrade has launched MIP Orbis, a new tool for MIP subscribers that provides easy access to international education data through interactive visualisations. Users can also explore source data to create their own charts and discover trends.

46. Do you want your higher education news delivered free to your inbox weekday mornings? Sign up for Campus Morning Mail – Hard Facts and Insider Analysis from Stephen Matchett.

47. 12 things you didn't know you could do with Gmail. Gmail is one of the world's most powerful and well-built tech tools, but there are ways to make it even more amazing.

The following excel tips comes from our AIR colleagues in the US.

48. Excel indexing and spinner controls. Myriad options exist for selecting subsets of data and analyzing them in Excel. Many analysts use complicated tables and often need coding and/or programming skills to make data meaningful. However, other analyses are simple and do not require any complex formatting, programming, or coding. An Excel "spinner" control used in tandem with indexed data is a useful option for simple analysis of small- or medium-sized datasets.

49. Creating an excel menu worksheet. This is a fairly simple setup that will allow you to create a menu of links to other worksheets in a workbook and give descriptive names to the menu items. This is particularly useful if you have multiple worksheets in your workbook.

Frivolous Favourites

50. Twitter hashtags you may like to follow:

    #academicnurseryrhymes – "is nerdy and sometimes inappropriate: but often hilarious".

    Scientists share their embarrassing #fieldworkfail stories

    Do you have any hashtags you would like to share? E-mail the editor@aair.org.au

51. The Academia Obscura Blooper Reel

52. Beards in Academia, Part II: More Popular than Ever? Beards and Masculinity in History. This week came the startling revelation that, in the past year, manufacturers of razors and related goods such as shaving foam have seen a drop in sales of more than £72 million pounds. The cause of this change? Beards. The question now is how long this trend will last and, perhaps more interesting; will there be a backlash against the beard? History suggests so.

Enjoy Reading?

This recent release may be of interest.

The problems associated with the corporatization of Canadian universities are nothing new, according to a new book by Claire Polster and Janice Newson titled A Penny For Your Thoughts How corporatization devalues teaching, research, and public service in Canada's universities. The book is a compilation of essays and articles that the authors have written since the early 1990s, and they address many of the issues associated with the "crisis" of corporatization, including the objectification and commodification of knowledge, commercialization of research, and demand for "flexible" part-time labour.

Positions Vacant

Seeking another opportunity in Institutional Research in Australia? Try our Higher Education Jobs webpage for current vacancies in the profession. If you are seeking an international career change see our American colleagues AIR Careers page.

Looking for some training and development?

See our **Training and Development** webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.

Here is a selection of current training and development opportunities.

FUNDING GRANTS FOR WOMEN IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

In 2015 Women & Leadership Australia is administering a national initiative to support the development of female leaders across all sectors.

From July 1 2015 the initiative will provide women in the education sector with grants for leadership development. More specifically, grant applications are open to women employed in the education sector at two levels. Please click on the preferred program link for details.

1. **Senior Management** and Executive level Women Leaders can apply for $12,000 Individual Grants to undertake the Advanced Leadership Program.

2. **Women Managers** can apply for $4,500 Individual Grants to undertake the

Accelerated Leadership Performance Program.

Expressions of Interest
To request a Scholarship Grant Application Form or additional information click here. Should you wish to discuss the initiative in more detail please contact Ian Johnson at the office of the National Industry Scholarship Program, Australian School of Applied Management on 03 9270 9000 or via ijohnson@asam.edu.au

Scholarship grants must be submitted prior to Friday 18 September 2015.

PRIVACY TRAINING WORKSHOPS 2015

This workshop provides intensive privacy training on requirements regarding the handling of personal information under the Commonwealth Privacy Act's Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) for senior staff responsible for managing privacy in private sector organisations and Commonwealth public sector agencies.

The course equips participants with a detailed understanding of:

- legal requirements regarding managing personal information under the APPs;
- how to apply the laws in practical situations; and
- how to identify and manage privacy issues and incidents.

Cost: $650 + GST (group and charity discounts available)

Cities, venues, dates & times

Workshop times: 9am - 3.30pm

- Canberra: Fri, 25 Sept 2015, Hellenic Club, 13B Moore Street
- Adelaide: Mon, 28 Sept 2015, Meridien, 21-39 Melbourne St, North Adelaide
- Melbourne: Tues, 29 Sept 2015, Adina Apartment Hotel, 189 Queen Street
- Sydney: Wed, 30 Sept 2015, Adina Apartment Hotel, 511 Kent St
- Brisbane: Thurs, 1 Oct 2015, Hotel Grand Chancellor, 23 Leichhardt St, Spring Hill
- Perth: Fri, 2 Oct 2015, Rendezvous Studio Hotel, 24 Mount Street

Click here for more privacy training workshop information.

Looking for higher education conferences and events?

Here is a selection of upcoming events that may be of interest. See our **Events/Fora** webpage for more national and international events.

TEMC 2015

30 August to 2 September 2015

Wollongong

The Tertiary Education Management (TEM) Conference, organised by TEFMA and ATEM, attracts professional administrators and managers from higher education and TAFE institutes, Polytechnics, Wananga, government departments, private providers and similar organisations.

The 2015 TEM Conference will be held 30 August - 2 September in Wollongong, NSW. The theme will be 'Leading Locally, Competing Globally'.

More information: http://www.atem.org.au/conferences/tem-conference

8TH ANNUAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH NETWORK

10–11 September

Scotland, UK

Registration and abstract submission for the conference are now open.

The Stories We Tell: Using institutional research to enhance policy, practice and engagement

The 2015 conference aims to explore the role of institutional research in supporting higher education institutions, agencies and practitioners make sense of the rapidly changing and globalised education context.

AAIR Affiliates

AAIR is affiliated with the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) in the United States of America, along with other groups located in Europe, South-East Asia, South Africa and Canada. Click on the links to find out more about our IR colleagues.

Higher Education Abroad

by Louise Hargreaves

Global News & Views

1. <u>5 Trends That Could Change the Face of Higher Education.</u> Recent economic changes mean that many individuals will pursue several career paths over the course of their lives, and many workers may require additional career training above and beyond the scope of a four-year degree. Thanks to these changes, the field of higher education is undergoing a rapid transformation that could have a lasting effect on the institution as a whole.

2. According to results from a new survey from the Center for Digital Education and Akamai Technologies, Inc. Seventy-four percent of responding <u>higher education officials identified increasing retention and graduation rates as their top priority.</u> Survey results also indicate that colleges and universities are exploring new online options to help them achieve success. Ninety percent of respondents anticipate increasing their use of web-facing applications in the next few years, particularly for mobile accessibility and online content aimed at increasing convenience and student services.

3. <u>Richard Branson: Three ways higher education can create more entrepreneurs.</u> Virgin Group founder takes a look at the college and university system, proposing ways that it could better serve young people by preparing them for business.

4. <u>The best strategy for managing disruptive innovation in higher education.</u> If a traditional college or university wants success for its implementation of a disruptive innovation, make sure that it's not subject to the same guidelines and strategies currently in place. In other words, disruptive innovation success means implementation via an autonomous subunit.

5. <u>New data</u> from Education New Zealand provides the final word on a strong 2014 for the country's international education sector. <u>International student numbers were up 13% over 2013</u> (an increase of 13,091 students) to reach a total of 110,198 for the year. This led in turn to a 17% increase in tuition revenues for 2014, sharply reversing the previous two-year trend of declining enrolment and marking the highest international enrolment levels in New Zealand in more than a decade.

6. <u>New Zealand: The role universities can play in supporting the state sector.</u> Over recent decades most of the developed world has invested significantly in lifting the proportion of the population that has a tertiary education, with a view to increasing what is commonly referred to as human capital. This article considers the educational profile of the state sector's employees at the time of the 2013 census, and examines the ways universities are contributing to this profile and to lifting the human capital available to the state sector.

7. <u>In Canada, you can pay for college with frequent-flyer miles.</u> All those frequent-flyer points can pile up, especially now that airlines are making it harder than ever to redeem them for flights. Why not spend them on something really useful-such as a college education? Through its partnership with Toronto-based HigherEdPoints, Air Canada's loyalty program, Aeroplan, lets members use miles for tuition - and sometimes room and board - at 70 colleges and universities in Canada.

8. <u>Canada: It's time to reinvent the MBA.</u> Recent articles have questioned the future of MBA programs and their relevance in the world. Are MBA programs still viable? Are their graduates still valued by employers? Despite these questions, demand for MBA programs is growing: 84 per cent of companies worldwide plan to add new MBAs to their work force in 2015 – up from 74 per cent in 2014 and 62 per cent five years ago, according to a global survey of employers published by the US-based Graduate Management Admission Council. The MBA is hardly dying, and certainly far from dead. But it needs an overhaul.

9. <u>Hillary Clinton has rolled out a sweeping higher education plan</u> — a $350 billion proposal that would help millions pay for college and reduce interest rates for people with student loans. While the plan is designed to address many issues associated with the cost and quality of higher education in the U.S. today, <u>its policy proposals can be boiled down to the four primary themes, which we discuss in terms of their likely economic impact.</u>

10. <u>Hard Evidence: are English universities strapped for cash?</u> English universities have known since June that there would be cuts to higher education funding. Now the amount and detail of the savings have been disseminated to universities: the sector must make a <u>total saving of £150m</u>. So what are the likely impacts of the latest round of cuts on universities and how will they manage their finances?

11. <u>The Challenges Facing UK Higher Education.</u> The largest professional services network in the world has identified seven key problems the UK's education sector will have to confront if it is to remain a global education giant. Deloitte's _Making the Grade_ report is the result of four years of client-based discussions and in-depth experience projects to uncover the fundamental flaws in the UK's education sector.

12. <u>The University of Law in the UK has pledged to give a 50% fee refund to graduates who don't find full-time employment within nine months</u> of completing their studies. All students who register for one of the university's Legal Practice Course programmes this September and meet course requirements will be eligible for the offer, including EU and international

students. Tuition fees for the course range from £10,950 to £14,765, depending on location, half of which will be paid back to students who have not secured a training contract with a law firm or a full time job within nine months of graduation.

13. Students at Hong Kong's most prestigious university say its academic freedom is under attack in what they maintain is the politically motivated stalling of the appointment of an administrator who supported last year's pro-democracy protests.

14. Japan rethinks unis in skills push. Japan is retooling its public universities, sacrificing liberal arts programs in collaboration with a business community eager for better-skilled graduates. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's goal is to transform Japan's government-funded universities into either global leaders in scientific research or schools focused on vocational training. He has called on them to "redefine their missions" and restructure their curricula.

15. The Russian government plans to make national military universities the most prestigious higher education institutions in the country, triple their funding and add to their number during the next several years, according to an official spokesman of the Russian Ministry of Defence. According to a recent order of Russia's Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, at least six military universities will be established in different parts of Russia.

16. Russia faces international scientific blockade. Russian science's isolation is deepening, reflected by dwindling international research cooperation, as well as restrictions on the country's scientists' access to imported scientific equipment and western journals. The Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) says that many domestic universities and scientific institutions may face a shortage of research equipment by the end of the year.

17. UNESCO, African Union push continental 'Bologna process'. The African Union Commission is pushing for all of its 54 member countries to ratify the UNESCO-backed 2014 Addis Convention – the Revised Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States.

18. How young Greeks changed their degree choices as the economy crashed. The Greek financial crisis has been one of the most severe in the developed world since 1929. The overall uncertainty about the future of the country has had catastrophic consequences on all sectors of the economy but also on the educational decisions of young Greeks. In the face of tighter budget constraints, college students are changing their minds about what to study.

Online Learning

19. MIT looks to stay in vanguard of digital education. One way to find the future of higher education is to track the brainstormers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who often seem to be a step ahead of the pack. So it matters when L. Rafael Reif, the MIT president, says that an idea for digital innovation is "on the table." Reif, in a recent visit with The Washington Post, said the institute is pondering whether to launch new online education programs that would generate revenue. "All this is on the table," he said, "and we're exploring it."

20. Should there be a "driver's license" for online programs? Utilizing the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement could be the key to reaching a national standard on recognizing online degree programs. The American Council on Education (ACE) has released a new paper on the importance of implementing a standardized approach to recognizing online degree programs across different states.

21. Coursera changes course on courses. One of the largest providers of massive open online courses is teaming up with several major financial and technology companies, the latest sign MOOC providers are scaling back their ambitions to up-end the world of academia to make a profit.

22. FutureLearn has attracted five new institutions to join its MOOC platform with massive, open, online courses. Aside from the international flavor of its contributing schools, FutureLearn distinguishes itself from other platforms by promoting social engagement among participating students in unique ways.

23. How Nanodegrees are disrupting Higher Education. Udacity created quite a buzz at the annual Google I/O conference this year when the for-profit online education provider unveiled its new Android Developer Nanodegree program. Udacity later made the headline-grabbing announcement that it will refund half the tuition ($200 per month) for students completing the program in 12 months.

24. 5 massive MOOC lessons learned by colleges and universities. Love them or hate them, MOOCs are still a popular option among college and universities. Yet, only the institution that takes note of MOOC evolution via trial-and-error will be able to effectively harness the multiple campus and student benefits offered by this notorious mode of online learning.

25. The "Netflix" model comes to online education. Recently, I began dubbing the current generation of students the "Netflix Generation." They learn when they want, and expect learning resources to be available when and where they need them. This is similar to the way they consume media through streaming services such as Netflix (for movies and television series) and Spotify (for music); they binge watch TV series multiple episodes in a row, and they expect a wide range of music to be available when and where they want. Increasingly, they expect learning resources to be available in the same fashion.

26. Delivering Online Ed, Worldwide. American universities mostly miscalculate international engagement. Many see online education as the best means to expand globally. Some invest in creating expensive overseas campuses in places like Dubai and Shanghai. Yet the most significant opportunities exist somewhere in between.

Tuition Fees

27. UK: International and postgraduate fee survey, 2015. A survey of tuition fees for the coming academic year, compiled by The Complete University Guide and published this week by *Times Higher Education*, puts the average annual home fee for a taught postgraduate degree at £5,901. Download the full 2015 international and postgraduate fee survey data.

Credentialing

28. [Pairing E-Portfolios with Badges to Document Informal Learning](#). E-portfolios have always offered an avenue to showcase informal learning, but at the University of Notre Dame's Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning, digital learning designers realized that the maximum potential of e-portfolios on their campus was not being met.

29. [How LinkedIn's Latest Move May Matter to Colleges](#). Whether or not college leaders realize it, the April announcement by LinkedIn that it would spend $1.5 billion to buy Lynda.com, a provider of consumer-focused online courses, carries notable consequences for higher education. At the very least, it's a sign of the growing interest in making academic and other educational credentials more visible and transparent to employers and others with reason to see them.

Competency Based Education

30. [A new Measure for collegiate Learning: What Presidents think about the Promised and Pitfalls of Competency-based education (free download).](#) More colleges and universities are starting to look beyond the traditional credit hour. When comparing different innovative approaches to student learning, college presidents believe that competency-based education will be a game-changer for higher education.

31. [US: How should quality assurance for competency-based education work?](#) As online, competency-based learning gains steam in higher education, a critical question is emerging. If the federal government will fund competency-based programs through Title IV dollars, how should it think about regulating these programs?

Technology

32. [Adobe's New Creative Cloud Has Big Plans for Higher Ed.](#) An array of new features and updates to Adobe's biggest products are geared toward seamless collaborative workflows in higher education. Earlier this year, Adobe rolled out a massive update to its Creative Cloud suite of apps, with a few new capabilities tailored to the needs of higher education.

33. [Universities and the Cloud.](#) The global cloud market is rapidly growing and forecasted to reach $270 billion in spending by 2020, an increase of 32.8% from 2014 to 2015 alone. In the education sector, universities are now embracing cloud offerings and accepting these services as a key element in IT.

34. [5 rising IT trends going into fall 2015.](#) From cloud migration to dealing with increased cyberattacks, never before have the innovate capabilities of the campus IT department been as mission-critical to colleges and universities under drastic transformation.

35. [Blackboard owners reportedly seeking $3B sale](#). According to a report from Reuters, Blackboard majority owner Providence Equity Partners LLC is considering selling the ed tech company for up to $3 billion, including debt. Blackboard is used by 1,900 institutions in 100 countries, and its growth in the learning management space has slowed amid increasing competition in the last several years.

36. [Ed tech investment tops $2.5B in first half of 2015](#). Investment in the worldwide educational technology sector is breaking records this year, already having surpassed the $2.42 billion invested in the entire 2014 calendar year. The tally comes from Ambient Insight's [market research](#) and only counts investment in instructional products directly related to the learning process, skipping indirectly related products and services.

Rankings, Ratings and Benchmarking

37. [College ratings system proposed by Obama is scrapped](#). Nearly two years ago, President Obama proposed a federal system to rate the nation's colleges and universities, one that would provide families with an objective and unified tool to compare schools and for taxpayers to determine whether the massive investments in scholarships and other government spending on higher education are worthwhile. After repeated delays and many consultations with skeptical college leaders, the ratings system was recently scrapped.

38. The Centre for World University Rankings ([CWUR](#)) publishes an annual ranking. CWUR uses eight indicators to rank the world's top 1,000 universities. The [World Ranking](#) table may be accessed here and the [Australian Ranking](#) table here.

39. [Potential refinements in the QS World University Rankings 2015](#). Despite the basic framework remaining the same since 2005, QS has not been afraid to listen and make refinements. Switching to Elsevier's Scopus database in 2007 was one such change. One of the well-known challenges in developing metrics from a bibliometric database like Scopus is taking into account the different patterns of publication and citation across discipline areas.

40. [Times Higher Education launches Nobel Laureates Ranking.](#) The top ten list of institutions around the world which have won the most Nobel Prizes this century does not contain a single British university. US institutions dominated the list, compiled by Times Higher Education, which was topped by Stanford, followed by Columbia and the University of California, Berkeley.

41. The Plague of Authorship Inflation. An [article in the Wall Street Journal](#) by Robert Lee Hotz describes the apparently inexorable increase in the number of authors of scientific papers. In 2014 according to the Web of Science the number of papers with 50 or more authors reached over 1400 and the number with 500 or more was over 200. [One issue that he does not explore is the way in which multi-authorship has distorted global university rankings](#).

42. [The era of rankings by subject is coming.](#) It is more than a change – it is a revolution in understanding what academic rankings represent today, what they can be and what purpose they can serve.

Student Recruitment and Mobility

43. [How Much Does it Cost to Study Abroad?](#) How times have changed! Studying abroad is no longer the luxury afforded only by an exclusive upper tier of privileged college students. Now, going away for a semester is considered commonplace (if not required) by colleges, universities, and even future employers. Still, study abroad isn't

cheap, and affording study abroad is a common reason why students don't go overseas. But how much does it cost, really, to study abroad?

44. [New survey findings on digital channels for college search.](#) A new survey of US high school students has some interesting insights into how students use digital channels, including social media, to discover, learn about, and engage with universities and colleges.

45. [US community colleges stepping up international recruitment.](#) In the last several months, community colleges have been in the spotlight in discussions of US higher education. In January 2015, US President Barack Obama announced his [plan to make community college free for US citizens](#). However, less attention has been paid to a smaller but significant population within US community colleges – international students.

46. [WES urges US institutions to focus recruitment on emerging markets.](#) US institutions hoping to increase their international student recruitment should look to Brazil, Vietnam, Indonesia and Nigeria as the top four emerging markets to watch over the next three years. This is the finding of a [study](#) by World Education Services, which urges US institutions to look beyond the major markets of China, India and South Korea for international recruitment.

47. [Economic climate and its impact on international mobility of Chinese students.](#) This article analyzes the trend with the global mobility of Chinese students in the context of economic uncertainties. Prior to the recession, a majority of Chinese students in the US were concentrated in graduate-level programmes. In 2006-2007, only 15% of a total of 67,723 students from China were enrolled in undergraduate programmes. By 2013-2014, undergraduates formed 40% of the 274,439 Chinese students, according to the Institute of International Education's Open Doors data.

48. [Overseas study not just for China's privileged.](#) Nearly two thirds of Chinese parents interested in sending their children abroad to study are in middle or senior management positions or are the heads of companies, a survey has found. A white paper produced by Vision Overseas, one of China's largest outbound study agents and a subsidiary of education company New Oriental,

surveyed more than 3,700 parents and students, with students making up 80% of respondents.

49. [Chinese universities increasingly forced to compete for students.](#) To say the least, higher education in China has undergone a dramatic expansion over the last two decades. The number of universities in the country has grown from about 1,400 in the year 2000 to 2,553 today. Combined higher education enrolment increased from 11.2 million in 2002 to 23.91 million in 2014. And this year alone, 7.5 million students graduated from Chinese universities and entered the job market.

50. [The number of Nepalese seeking to study abroad set a record last fiscal year](#) as the figures increased nearly three-fold over a four-year period. According to the Department of Scholarship under the Ministry of Education, 30,696 students acquired the No Objection Certification (NOC) letter, which is a must for Nepalese to get enrolment in academic institutions except in India.

51. [Germany's profile as a master's degree destination is on the rise](#) as government statistics show the number of international students graduating from a master's degree increased 131% in the six years after 2008. In 2013 alone, 41% of all foreign graduates completed a master's degree programme, attracted to the country's academic reputation, little to no tuition fees and increasing offering of English taught courses.

52. [Japan has been actively pursuing internationalization of its higher education,](#) and recruiting foreign students has been a major part of this endeavour. In 1983, Japan announced its plan to recruit 100,000 foreign students by the year 2000 and in 2008 instituted a plan to recruit 300,000 foreign students by 2020. Although the figures are still relatively low compared with those in Europe and North America, they bring a potentially powerful force for social change to a country marked by high ethnic homogeneity.

53. [The number of Brazilian students studying abroad through full fee-paying undergraduate and master's degrees is expected to increase](#), according to a recent survey by BMI of international officers. The survey, which was sent to directors of international offices at Brazilian universities, found that 76% of respondents are expecting some form of increase in the number of students

who will pay for an undergraduate or master's programme overseas, in the next three years.

54. [Indian higher education institutions and IITs are losing US$6-7bn annually to their foreign counterparts](#) as more students look to study overseas, the Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India has claimed. The industry body has called on government to create an independent commission to improve quality across public and private sectors of education.

55. [Piecing Together Russian Student Mobility Trends: Research Data and Russian Practitioner Perspectives.](#) Meeting with the 2014 Fulbright Russian International Education Administrators (RIEA) Program cohort was an educational experience for me: specifically it taught me that mobility data doesn't always tell us the full story, and that one has to always speak to colleagues in the field to fully understand the context of student mobility.

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A great way to get involved with the AAIR community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your IR colleagues? The next AAIR Newsletter will be published in the last week of September. Please send your contributions to the editor@aair.org.au by **Friday September 18**.

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AAIR eNewsletter Editor