

**e-Newsletter June-July 2012**

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**EDITORIAL OF SORTS**

The deadline for abstracts for the 2012 AAIR Forum looms, so time to put together some words behind that presentation you've been thinking about. Even if you haven't been thinking about it, I'm sure there's some work that you could frame up to share with your colleagues. Partner up with another colleague who has presented before if you're a newbie and feel a bit daunted. For those of us who've done this before, consider encouraging colleagues in your workplace and supporting/mentoring them in the process.

Lots in this newsletter – rankings have been occupying my time so slipped in a several items.

The VET funding cuts in Victoria continue to occupy much column space in the media and elsewhere. There's been protests in various locations including Geelong (Gordon TAFE) where I live. I daren't put this Youtube video in 'Light Relief' as it's more akin to black humour for many. View 'the Downfall of Vet – A Victorian tragedy' [here](#). Don't laugh too much higher ed colleagues – we may be next!!

**AAIR Special Interest Group (SIG) Forum  
5 to 6 July 2012  
Melbourne**

**"A New Beginning in Demanding Times"**

Not too late to register for AAIR's 2012 SIG event, jointly hosted by RMIT and Victoria University, and supported by Altis Consulting, Tableau software and Intech Solutions.

As per last year, the SIG will focus on the areas of Load Planning, Data Warehousing/ Business intelligence, and Federal Government statistical reporting.

<http://www.vu.edu.au/events/2012-aaair-sig-forum-a-new-beginning-in-demanding-times>

We are close to the end of financial year and an AAIR membership is a valid tax deduction for probably all of you!!! Please consider supporting AAIR and taking out a membership. The subscriber list to this newsletter continues to grow - but there's only one financial AAIR member for every five subscribers.

<http://aaair.org.au/pages/benefits-of-membership>

Feedback, comments, suggestions and contributions to the Newsletter are, as always, welcomed.

So, ...put your feet up, read on and sample the varied mix that follows.

Enjoy....

Wendy Marchment  
Editor  
[editor@aaair.org.au](mailto:editor@aaair.org.au)



## PLACES TO GO – THINGS TO DO

For more events make sure you check out <http://aair.org.au/pages/events>

If you have relevant events you would like posted please email them to [info@aair.org.au](mailto:info@aair.org.au)



### **15th International First Year in Higher Education (FYHE) conference**

**26 to 29 June, 2012**

**Brisbane**

The conference provides the opportunity to disseminate research and practice for enhancing the first year in higher education. Discussion on a wide variety of subjects is encouraged and focuses on the following topics:

- \* Institutional-level innovation for the FYHE
- \* Strategies that address social inclusion in HE
- \* Promoting Indigenous perspectives in the FYHE
- \* Academic and professional partnerships for an enhanced FYHE
- \* Intentional FYHE to Capstone experiences
- \* Assessing FY student learning
- \* Institution-wide curricular and co-curricular approaches
- \* Work integrated learning for FY students

[www.fyhe.com.au](http://www.fyhe.com.au)

QUT Equity Services is conducting a special interest group session on widening participation. The topic is *Approaches to HEPPP-funded Low SES Student Retention: Uni-Wide Strategies Built to Last*. This interactive session will be of particular interest to WP practitioners involved in developing low SES retention strategies and those interested in good practice in this area. If interested, see FYHE website:

<http://www.fyhe.com.au/> - follow the registration links to pre- and post-Conference Day packages.



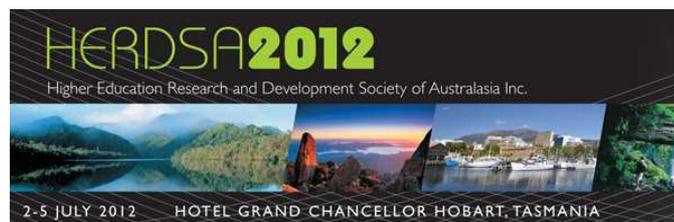
### **GCA Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) Survey Manager Information Forum**

**28 to 29 June 2012**

**Melbourne**

The annual GCA AGS Survey Manager Information Forum (SMIF) aims to provide an opportunity for new and experienced Survey Managers to hear about and discuss recent changes to the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS), get a refresher on key aspects of the survey methodology and meet their colleagues from other institutions. There will be a mix of presentations and sessions over the two days with the second day relating mainly to the current AGS review.

For further information contact Darren Matthews [Darren.Matthews@graduatecareers.edu.au](mailto:Darren.Matthews@graduatecareers.edu.au) or phone (03) 9605 3712.



### **HERDSA 2012: Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia**

**2 to 5 July 2012**

**Hobart, Tasmania**

The main theme is Connections in Higher Education. Conference delegates will explore the policies, research, leadership and student outcomes we should be pursuing in higher education world-wide to establish and sustain our connections with the entire sector. The focus will be on the following sub-themes:

- \* Creating and sustaining peer connections
- \* Establishing community connections
- \* Enriching interdisciplinary connections
- \* Connections for student success
- \* Connecting with research

The conference will be of relevance to leaders, policy makers, academics, teachers, researchers, tertiary institution managers, support staff and students in the higher education sector and in government.

<http://conference.hersda.org.au/2012/>

## 2012 Brisbane International Geospatial Forum

8 to 11 July 2012

Brisbane

"Global Connections through Mapping"

For the first time the organisations that represent the enthusiasts, practitioners and the business of all things Geospatial are coming together to stage the 2012 Brisbane International Geospatial Forum.

Details [here](#)



## 21st National VET Research Conference 'No Frills' 2012

11 to 13 July 2012

Adelaide

Co-hosted with TAFE SA, and held for the first time in Adelaide, this 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary conference will be an opportunity to celebrate, collaborate and connect.

Practitioners and researchers, especially early career VET researchers or those new to the VET sector, are invited to share their research and knowledge in a range of ways.

<http://www.nofrills.ncver.edu.au/>

## Redefining Admission Strategies

21 to 22 August 2012

Melbourne

Whilst the new higher education system is demand driven, it comes in the context of distinct equity targets. In response to the removal of caps for undergraduate places, a 2012 analysis of admissions data has found significant declines in ATAR.

<http://redefiningadmissions.com/>

**If you attended the  
AIR Forum  
2 to 6 June 2012  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Consider typing a few paragraphs, sending a photo or two, and sharing your experience with other AAIRies

Email [editor@aair.org.au](mailto:editor@aair.org.au)



## Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) 2012 International Conference

27 to 31 August 2012

Adelaide

This year's theme, *Evaluation in a Changing World*, invites all those with an interest in evaluation to think about the ways our world is changing and therefore our work is – or could be – changing. This theme provides an invitation to highlight and examine new developments in evaluation methodology and technologies. It also invites the conference itself to trial some innovative sessions, approaches, and technologies.

Pre Conference Workshops will include 10 Full Day and 6 half day workshops on a wide range of stimulating evaluation topics.

This year's program will focus on the following topic streams:

- Community Welfare
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- International Development
- Methodology
- Wicked Social Problems
- Justice

The Preliminary program is now available.

<http://www.aes2012.com.au/>

## The 7th Annual University Governance and Regulations Forum

4 to 5 September 2012

Canberra

From the website: "This Forum has become the key gathering of senior level management from across the higher education sector, who join together to share ideas on management issues impacting their institutions and to discuss key strategies on how to implement regulatory reform of the sector.

The two-day agenda will examine the impact and implications of regulatory reform, including the challenges for university governance and management and the legislative requirements of recent reforms."

<http://www.informa.com.au/conferences/education/university-governance-and-regulations-forum>



## **EAIR 34th Annual Forum 2012**

**5 to 8 September 2012**

**Stavanger, Norway**

The theme is 'The Social Contract of Higher Education'. Registrations are now open.

Tracks are:

- Education as a vehicle of social justice
- Policy development for knowledge enhancement
- Higher education in a competitive world
- Promoting higher education in decades of open access
- Student experience: Attractive learning and teaching
- Management and governance: Friend or foe?
- Institutional research: Measuring effectiveness in higher education

<http://www.eair.nl/forum/stavanger/welcome.asp>



## **TAFE Directors Australia – 2012 National Conference**

**6 to 7 September 2012**

**Hyatt Regency, Perth**

The conference theme is 'East meets West'.

As the conference blurb notes: 'Delegates will be challenged to explore issue of skills development that not only reflect the developing relationship between Australia and Asia but also the changing relationships between our western and eastern states.'

Speakers include: Duncan Calder, President, Australia China Business Council; Pam Christie, Deputy Director-General, NSW TAFE and Community Education; Michael Gallagher, Go8 Executive Director; Phil Honeywood, Executive Director, International Education Association of Australia.

Conference website is [here](#)



## **36th TEM Conference**

**16 to 19 September 2012**

**Adelaide**

The theme is 'The Right Blend: Innovation and Transformation'. This conference offers professional administrators and managers within the tertiary sector, including members of both the Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) and the Tertiary Education Facilities Management Association (TEFMA), an opportunity to explore innovative developments and new ideas around people, services, facilities and environment. Our focus will be ensuring positive outcomes for students as well as a productive working and learning environment for staff and our broader institution communities.

<http://temc.org.au/>



## **IMHE General Conference 2012**

**Attaining and Sustaining Mass Higher Education**

**17 to 19 September 2012**

**Paris, France**

Join around 500 higher education policy-makers, institutional leaders and academic experts active in higher education at the biennial General Conference of the OECD's Programme for Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE).

The goal of the Conference is to identify longer-term trends and will include analyses of national and institutional policies, case studies and the latest research from the OECD and elsewhere.

[www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/generalconference](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/generalconference)



**ARMS 14<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference  
19 to 21 September 2012  
Gold Coast, QLD**

The Australasian Research Management Society (ARMS) Conference this year has the theme: 'Ride the Wave of Collaboration: Industry, Institutions, Individuals'

Developing and sustaining collaborations and partnerships are key factors in enhancing research output and impact, broadening access to world-class technologies and data resources and facilitating opportunities to move further and faster in the research enterprise. With the advancing speed of communications, these opportunities are evermore "location independent" and with that bring various challenges particularly in terms of processes, values and expectations.

<http://www.arms2012.org.au/index.php>



**Canadian Institutional Research and Planning Association (CIRPA) 21st annual Conference**

**21 to 23 October 2012  
Montréal, Québec**

The theme 'Assessment and Accountability: Back to the Future' reflects issues of interest to the public, governments, and institutions that have persisted across time, and that are very much in today's headlines. CIRPA encourages submissions that address conceptual, methodological, and practical challenges and opportunities in the way colleges and universities assess their performance and account for the fulfilment of their missions.

<http://www.cirpa-acpri.ca/>



**Conference: AQFs 5 & 6: Debating the future of mid-level qualifications in Australia  
25-26 October 2012**

**RMIT University, Melbourne**

The future of diplomas and advanced diplomas is uncertain, while associate degrees are gaining in prominence. This two-day conference will debate and discuss the future of these mid-level qualifications in Australia. It will consider the role they play in preparation for work, as a transition to higher qualifications and in widening access to higher-level qualifications.

Conference keynote speakers

- \* Robin Shreeve (CEO, Skills Australia);
- \* Tom Karmel (Managing Director, NCVET);
- \* Gareth Parry (Professor of Education, University of Sheffield, UK); and
- \* Leesa Wheelahan (LH Martin Institute)

Pre-conference workshops

Workshop 1: Developing associate degrees: Consulting with stakeholders to define needs and graduate capabilities

Led by Professor David Dowling, Professor of Engineering Education, University of Southern Queensland.

Workshop 2: Developing associate degrees: stakeholder needs, curriculum and pedagogy  
Led by Dr Helen Smith, Senior Research Fellow, Global Studies, Social Science & Planning, RMIT University.

Deadline for papers/abstracts 30 July 2012

Go [here](#)

**Data Management & Information Quality Conference Europe 2012 and Data Warehouse & Business Intelligence Conference Europe 2012  
5 to 7 November 2012**

**London, UK**

This is an independent event, offering its audience a diverse range of experienced speakers who will provide a broad, practical perspective on Data Management, Information Quality and Data Warehousing & Business Intelligence. It will offer unparalleled opportunities for networking and discussion of the latest issues.

<http://www.irmuk.co.uk/dm2012/>



## **SEAAIR 2012 Conference**

**6 to 8 November 2012**

**Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia**

In the 21st century, higher education has evolved from a detached learning institution to an ARE (Academia-Research-Entrepreneurial) eco-system. The ARE eco-system is formed from an erudite nucleus infused with local and international research paradigm supported by enterprising intellects thus impacting stakeholders in various ways particularly in developing a world-class intellectual environment. This year 12th SEAAIR conference theme: - "Culturalizing World-Class Higher Education in ASEAN" examines internalized exceptional and accomplished elements which have provided excellence within the ARE eco-system towards creating global academic excellence.

**Deadline** for papers/abstracts 12 July 2012

<http://www.seairweb.info/>



## **ascilite 2012**

**25 to 28 November 2012**

**Wellington, New Zealand**

Education is facing a number of significant challenges. Recent waves of global uncertainty coupled with local crisis & government reforms are reshaping the tertiary education landscape. In the backdrop of these challenges new digital technology is enabling new models of teaching and learning. Yet, serious questions remain over the sustainability of these new models and the claims about the potential of new technology, especially in the face of deeper challenges.

The aim of the 2012 ascilite conference is to explore some of these challenges and to better understand the complexity of sustainability in its widest sense. The basic premise is that what happened in the past is no longer a reliable guide to the future.

**Deadline** for papers/abstracts 15 June 2012

<http://www.ascilite2012.org/home>

## **Australasian Applied Statistics Conference 2012**

**(GenStat & ASReml)**

**3 to 7 December 2012**

**Queenstown, NZ**

The Australasian GenStat Users Association Incorporated (AGUAI), in conjunction with Plant & Food Research invite you to attend the second Australasian Applied Statistics Conference from 4th-7th December 2012 at the Crowne Plaza hotel, Queenstown, NZ.

Previously known as the GenStat Conference, these meetings have traditionally attracted delegates from a large proportion of the biometrical community in Australia and New Zealand, as well as overseas. They provide the opportunity for exchange of ideas in all areas of biometrics as well as encouraging networking and collaboration. Case studies in statistics as applied to biological sciences are a key feature of this conference.

<http://www.aasc2012.com/>

## **Dates to think about for next year:**

### **35th Annual Conference:**

**Texas Association for Institutional Research  
11 to 13 February 2013**

<http://www.texas-air.org/conference/2013/>



### **AIR Forum**

**18 to 22 May 18 2013**

**Long Beach, California**



### **35th EAIR Forum**

**28 to 31 August 2013**

**Rotterdam, The Netherlands**



**2012 AAIR  
ANNUAL FORUM**  
Terrigal | 12-14 November  
[www.aair.org.au](http://www.aair.org.au)



## Only 2 weeks to go to submit your abstract!

Abstract submissions close 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012

Submit your abstract on one of the following themes:

### Broad Themes: Reflections on the state of IR practice

- Building capacity to use IR to inform decisions
- Critiquing evolution and maturing of IR practice and practitioners

### Topic-specific Themes

- Exploring innovative approaches to student admissions and load management
- Undertaking student retention studies and predictive modelling
- Integrating strategic planning and budgeting
- Developing and reporting key performance indicators
- Leveraging technology and promoting business intelligence
- Collecting, reporting and using student and stakeholder feedback for improvement (via surveys, focus groups, etc.)
- Linking and exploiting institutional data collections
- Addressing data governance and data quality challenges
- Recognising and managing student and staff diversity
- Supporting workforce planning

**Don't miss out on  
Early Bird registration rates!**

**Member full registration: \$980  
Member day registration: \$380**

**Full Registration includes AAIR  
membership for 2013!**

Visit the Website:  
[www.conference.aair.org.au/2012/](http://www.conference.aair.org.au/2012/)

### Confirmed Keynote Speakers

**Mr Michael Beaton-Wells**

Full-time Commissioner

**Dr Ian Tho**

Executive Director, Regulatory Risk and Information Group  
*Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency*

**Dr Victor Borden**

Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and  
Senior Advisor  
*Indiana University Bloomington, US*

For further information please contact the Forum Organisers

Email: [victoria@leishman-associates.com.au](mailto:victoria@leishman-associates.com.au)

Telephone: 61 3 6234 7844



## NEWSLETTER NOTES

### 1. Higher Education Staff Data Collection Review: Issues Paper

A number of changes are proposed in the long overdue review of the staff data collection, including “apportion FTE weight to each activity undertaken by staff”. Now that could be ‘interesting’ in terms of implementation.

The ubiquitous Student Staff Ratio gets a mention. All up, 22 questions to respond to. Unfortunately there’s no mention of combining the TAFE and HE staff collections. Double, and very different reporting must be a headache for the dual sector universities. It’s proposed to extend the reporting requirements to private higher education providers which may be a new headache for some.

Submissions are due on 2 July.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Policy/Pages/HigherEducationStaffDataReview.aspx>

### 2. HEIMS Data Collection Newsletter May 2012

Innovation (was DEEWR) staff do have a sense of humour, as shown in their latest newsletter – page 2 starts with

**The tracks of my tears...**



Beyond the humour there’s a more serious message though. It should be of concern that the most common causes for late submissions relate to fairly basic issues:

- “a misunderstanding of what these submissions are and when they are due
- no current staff with adequate training/knowledge to submit data”

For a major data collection that much analyses, projections and decisions are drawn from, (certainly in regard to universities) responsibility is unfortunately all too often ‘tucked’ away with a sole lower level staff member ie high risk - single point of failure. Enough said...

The full newsletter is [here](#)

### 3. Mission Based Compacts On-line

In the 2009-10 Federal Budget the Australian Government announced a reform package for the higher education sector which included mission-based compacts with Australian universities. The 2011-13 compacts (41 in all) have been made available on-line as well as an overall summary by the Department.

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/Research/MissionBasedCompacts/Pages/default.aspx>



### 4. Research in Higher Education (RIHE): AIR Forum Issue Volume 53, # 3, March 2012

RIHE is the official peer-reviewed academic journal of AIR. Articles in this issue are:

- Tuition Discounting for Revenue Management, by Nicholas W. Hillman\*
- A Multi-level Examination of College and Its Influence on Ecumenical Worldview Development, by Matthew J. Mayhew
- Academic Labor Markets and Assistant Professors’ Employment Outcomes, by Lowell L. Hargens
- Faculty Organizational Commitment and Citizenship, by Janet Lawrence, Molly Ott, and Alli Bell\*
- Are Student Evaluations of Teaching Effectiveness Valid for Measuring Student Learning Outcomes in Business Related Classes? A Neural Network and Bayesian Analyses, by Craig S. Galbraith, Gregory B. Merrill, and Doug M. Kline
- Effect Sizes and Statistical Methods for Meta-Analysis in Higher Education, by Nicholas A. Bowman\*

\* Denotes AIR member

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/m4638j1244w18113/>



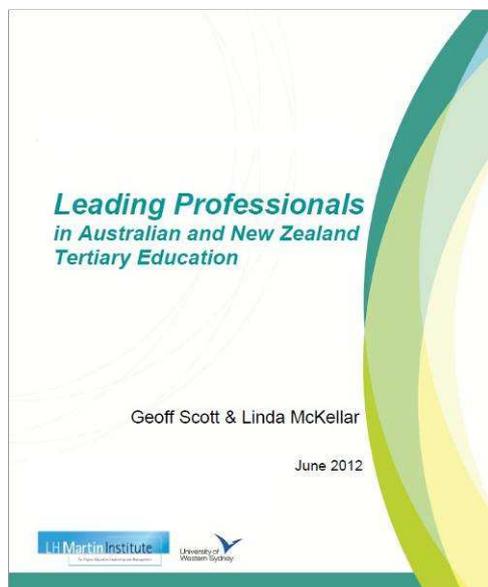
### 5. Who takes a gap year and why?

Taking a break between high school and university is becoming increasingly popular for Australian students. Many use this time to work, undertake other study, travel and have a rest from formal learning. This paper discusses how a ‘gap-taker’ can be defined, noting that gap-taking is not the same as deferral. Using Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth data, the paper goes on to quantify the extent of gap-taking and examines the characteristics of gap-takers and non-gap takers

<http://www.lsay.edu.au/publications/2496.html>

## 6. National Guidelines of Good Practice for Institutional Research in Irish Higher Education

I was recently directed to this booklet which is of relevance; although published in 2008. Should we perhaps have an Australasian equivalent? Download the booklet [here](#)



## 7. Leading Professional in Australian and New Zealand Tertiary Education

Geoff Scott and Linda McKellar were the authors of this report. The Association of Tertiary Education Management (ATEM), LH Martin Institute and University of Western Sydney all partnered in this research that identified leadership competencies and capabilities of professional staff in tertiary institutions in Australia and New Zealand.

“The study replicates the methodology of the Learning Leaders in Times of Change study which was done to identify leadership competencies and capabilities for academic staff in tertiary institutions in 2008”, said Linda McKellar, ATEM Vice President.

The aim of the project was to:

- Define the capabilities which characterise an effective leader of the professional services and activities in Australian and New Zealand tertiary education institutions;
- Identify the challenges such leaders face and how they might best be addressed;
- Produce a set of recommendations for ATEM and tertiary institutions to consider on how to help the sector select, support and develop and monitor its leadership of the area; and,
- Compare the results for professional leaders with those of academic leaders.

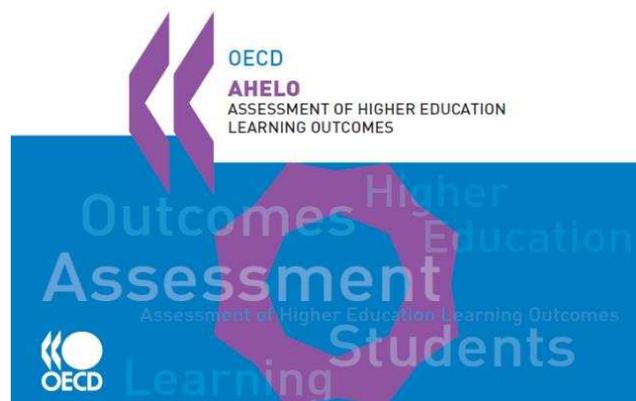
Download the report [here](#)

## 8. Open-door uni policy passes the test

Timely opinion piece by Belinda Robinson, Chief Executive of Universities Australia, in the AFR refuting claims that there is somehow a substantial lowering of standards in universities with the increase in commencing students under the demand-driven model.

Nice to see some evidence presented, rather than just assertions ie “the ATAR is not always a particularly reliable predictor of university success. Studies conducted to date indicate that the correlation between ATAR and academic performance is strongest for students with an ATAR of 80 and above. But between 40 and 80, the correlation is in effect non-existent and highly variable for an ATAR below 40. This suggests that while ATAR has a place, there are other factors that contribute to student success at university.”

Read the article [here](#)



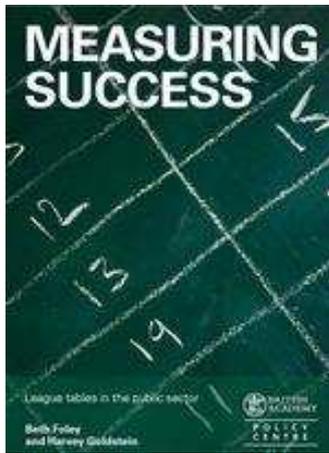
## 9. Testing student and university performance globally: OECD's AHELO

The Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) will test what students in higher education know and can do upon graduation. More than a ranking, AHELO is a direct evaluation of student performance. It will provide data on the relevance and quality of teaching and learning in higher education. The test aims to be global and valid across diverse cultures, languages and different types of institutions.

The feasibility study involves seventeen participating countries/economies representing a range of geographic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The May 2012 update on the project is available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/8/26/48088270.pdf>

For more information about AHELO go [here](#)



## 10. Measuring Success: League tables in the public sector A British Academy Policy Centre report

Institutional rankings or 'league tables' are now widely used in the public sector. Employed in areas such as health, policing and education they help determine whether schools or hospitals are deemed to be 'failing', whether police forces are tackling crime effectively and how students rate their university courses. But despite being widespread, their application is still highly contentious.

Measuring Success examines the use of league tables in education and policing, and reviews the available evidence to determine the benefits and the problems associated with their use. The report concludes that good evidence about league tables is in short supply, which has only helped fuel their controversy; it also highlights the limitations of league tables and recommends that wherever they are produced they should be accompanied by prominent 'health warnings'. Furthermore, the authors suggest that some of the negative side effects of league tables could be reduced if they are used only as an internal tool to improve performance by the institutions involved and not published or made publicly available

<http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Measuring-success.cfm>

## 11. Universitas21 Rankings

U21 has produced their own ranking of higher education systems based on resources, environment, connectivity and output. Research authors at the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne, looked at the most recent data from 48 countries and territories across 20 different measures.

<http://www.universitas21.com/collaboration/details/48/u21-rankings-of-national-higher-education-systems>

## 12. Rankings Without Reason

This is an article by Phil Baty (THE World Rankings) which appeared in Inside Higher Ed. It's good to see he acknowledges the inadequacies of rankings:

"Global university ranking tables are inherently crude, as they reduce universities to a single composite score. Such rigid adherence to the rankings tables risks missing the many pockets of excellence in narrower subject areas not captured by institution wide rankings, or in areas of university performance, such as knowledge transfer, that are simply not captured well by any ranking.

One of the great strengths of global higher education its extraordinarily rich diversity, which can never be captured by the THE World University Rankings, which deliberately seek only to compare those research-intensive institutions competing in a global marketplace and which include less than 1 percent of the world's higher education institutions."

Read it [here](#)



## 13. Top 100 Under 50

Yet more spin-offs from world university rankings. THE produced this version recently which relates to institutions under 50 years old. THE's main article (and many more) at <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=419908>

Of course, QS produced their Top 50 under 50. <http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/top-50-under-50>

## 14. Strength in numbers: do ERA rankings add up for universities?

Some suggestions for changes to the Excellence in Research for Australia Initiative (ERA) in this article by Matthew Bailes, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) at Swinburne University of Technology. One is "Ideally the ARC could publish a histogram of each individual's own rating within a discipline, between 1.0 and 5.0, and then averages, standard deviations, medians, maybe even skewness. This would avoid quantisation errors, and allow a truer representation of research excellence from each discipline. A useful contribution.

Read The Conversation article [here](#)

## 15. Institutional Performance in Higher Education Conference

Presentations from the Institutional Performance in Higher Education Conference held in May 2012 are available for download. I attended and make the following observations:

Jamil Salmi's presentation was polished and professional. The powerpoint was appropriately used, enhancing the talk, so it probably won't make a huge amount of sense on its own. One excerpt is:

*How do you recognize a world-class university?*

- everyone wants one
- no one knows what it is
- no one knows how to get one

*Philip G. Altbach*

Oh, so true except not all of us want one! Probably every VC does though.

The presentation from Dr Ying Cheng, Executive Director & Associate Professor Center for World-Class Universities Graduate School of Education, Shanghai Jiao Tong University contains lots of stats including *Correlation with ARWU Score and THE Score*. Showed that they are transparent about the data used and aim for validity in a ranking that's only about research, with no pretensions otherwise.

Bruce Guthrie was unable to say too much as the AQHE report still isn't released.

Simon Marginson's presentation included the following graph which highlights the publication trends in the report that follows.

<http://www.criterionconferences.com/presentations/institutional/presentations.zip>



## GLOBAL PUBLISHING:

CHANGES IN SUBMISSION TRENDS AND THE IMPACT ON SCHOLARLY PUBLISHERS

### 16. Global Publishing Report: Changes in Submission Trends and the impact on Scholarly Publishers

This is a Thomson Reuters report.

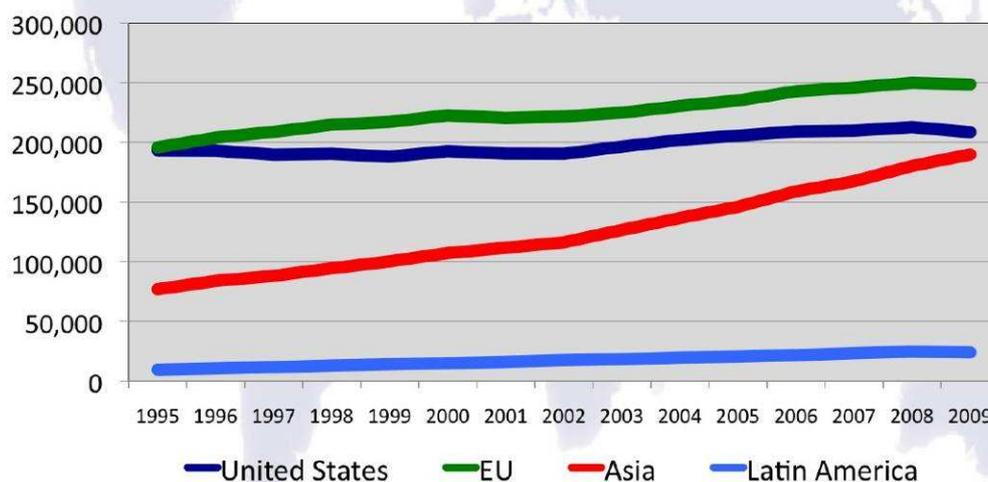
“One of the most apparent trends, and one that's currently seen at all stages of the research and publishing workflow, is the significant increase in research output from emerging regions.

Managing this increase in submissions and the focus on delivering truly global content while maintaining rigorous peer review practices present challenges and opportunities for publishers, along with questions that merit further examination.”

Download the report [here](#)

## Science papers per year, 1995-2009 USA, EU, Asia, Latin America

US National Science Foundation data



## 17. Australian Budget 2012

Higher Education was spared in the Federal Budget delivered in early May. Media releases are available at <http://innovation.gov.au/AboutUs/Budget/Pages/default.aspx>

## 18. New Zealand Budget 2012

Across the ditch universities fared OK as well. Here is a link to the press releases. On the left hand side there are separate information sheets for each of the sectors <http://www.tec.govt.nz/Funding/Budget/Budget-2012/>



## 19. Science Student Statistics 2002-2009/10

Ian Chubb's [Health of Australian Science Report](#) was released on 23 May. Agricultural sciences, physics, mathematics and chemistry are highlighted in the report as being vulnerable and all are crucial for Australia's future. The total numbers in Engineering don't meet demand and there are shifts between disciplines.

Opportunities outlined in the report include developing a more strategic funding system and improving the relationships between science and industry.

Various commentary on the report is at The Conversation website

<http://theconversation.edu.au/pages/health-of-australian-science>

One of the reports commissioned for the Chief Scientist Ian Chubb's Health of Australian Science Report was 'Unhealthy Science? University Natural and Physical Sciences 2002-2009/10' by Dr Ian Dobson. This report heavily analyses DEEWR student statistics from aggregated datasets and points to some relevant issues in drawing conclusions, including data integrity issues.

It's available here along with the other two commissioned reports.

<http://www.chiefscientist.gov.au/2011/10/health-of-australian-science-report/>



## 20. VET research for industry

This paper was a keynote address at the AVETRA conference held in Canberra in April 2012. Karmel notes that industry is arguably the key stakeholder in the Australian VET sector and discusses six areas of research which raise questions about VET and industry, either in terms of how public training funds are allocated or the educational principles on which VET is based.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2497.html>

## 21. Measuring student satisfaction from the Student Outcomes Survey

The Student Outcomes Survey is an annual national survey of vocational education and training (VET) students. Since 1995, participants have been asked to rate their satisfaction with different aspects of their training, grouped under three main themes: teaching, assessment, and general skills and learning experiences. In this paper we review and compare three different methods of creating summary measures - Rasch analysis, weighted means and simple means - that encapsulate the three main themes of student satisfaction. We find that all three methods yield similar results and so recommend using the simple means method to create the summary measures.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2492.html>

## 22. Australian vocational education and training statistics: students and courses 2011 - preliminary data

This publication presents preliminary aggregate figures on the number of students, subject enrolments, hours of delivery, full-year training equivalents and qualification levels in advance of the release of the more detailed publication in early July 2012. As the data are preliminary, they may be subject to change as further processing of the data is undertaken.

Student numbers increased in most states and territories, with the greatest increases reported in Victoria (14.8%), Northern Territory (1.5%) and Western Australia (1.1%).

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2504.html>

## 23. Market models won't fix the problems in vocational education

This article by Pat Forward relates to the Victorian TAFE cuts and is available [here](#)

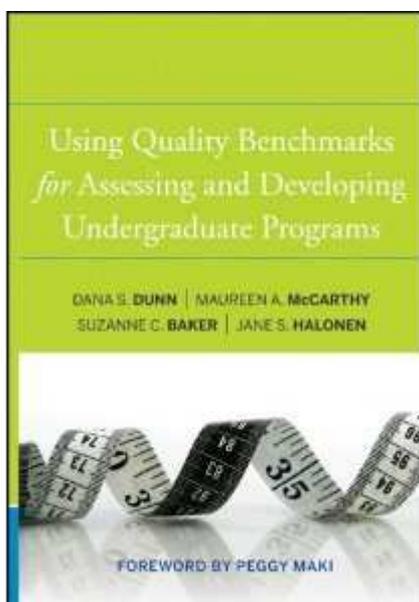
## 24. National Charter for TAFE

Excerpt from Campus review article: “TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) has taken a bold step by launching a national charter for TAFEs as the basis for a framework for the National Partnership Agreement on Skills.

The purpose of the charter is to form a framework under the recent COAG agreement, which included “developing and piloting independent validation of training provider assessments and implementing strategies which enable TAFEs to operate effectively in an environment of greater competition”.

The charter was developed following recommendations of Skills Australia in its landmark report, *Skills for Prosperity: A VET Roadmap*. Skills Australia indicated that TDA can articulate the principles of Australia’s TAFE network. The national charter is based on four principles. The first being that funding maintains the viability and responsiveness of public providers; the second states that quality criteria are substantially enhanced; the third principle is that governance enables flexibility and responsiveness; and fourth is the recognition of the innovation and leadership roles of TAFE, including its pivotal position in rural and regional Australia.

<http://www.tda.edu.au/>



## 25. Using Quality Benchmarks for Assessing and Developing Undergraduate Programs

*Using Quality Benchmarks for Assessing and Developing Undergraduate Programs* is a book by Dana S. Dunn, Maureen A. McCarthy, Suzanne C. Baker, and Jane S. Halonen that’s reviewed [here](#).



## 26. Deferring a University Offer in Regional Victoria

This longitudinal study involved the Local Learning Employment Networks (LLENs), the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and the Education Policy and Leadership Unit, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. The current study allows a comparison of metropolitan and non-metropolitan deferrers’ outcomes. It presents the 2011 results from a longitudinal survey of school completers from the 2009 Year 12 cohort, who, when contacted as part of the Victorian On Track survey of school leavers in 2010, had deferred a place at university. The high rate of deferral amongst non-metropolitan school completers was the impetus for the study, although the current survey allows a comparison of metropolitan and non-metropolitan deferrers’ outcomes. The study has examined whether deferral constitutes a disadvantage for young people living in metropolitan and non-metropolitan Victoria.

Download the report [here](#)



## 27. University Funding 1996-2010

This Go8 Backgrounder paper examines Commonwealth funding for universities over the period 1996-2010. Governments have boosted and cut university funding in different ways over time. Governments of both parties have taken measures to improve funding, but increases in recurrent funding tend not to be sustained in real terms as the sector expands. The data point to the fiscal limits to any Government’s capacity to fund a mass (and post-mass) higher education system under the current funding framework. Download it [here](#)



## 28. Research and Experimental Development, Higher Education Organisations, Australia, 2010

This ABS release presents statistics on Research and Experimental Development (R&D) undertaken by Australian higher education institutions in respect of the calendar year ended 31 December 2010. These statistics, as well as time series data, are also available in spreadsheet format (data cubes).

Download it [here](#)

## 29. INQAAHE 2012 Presentations

Presentations that were given at the INQAAHE Forum held in Melbourne are available.

<http://www.inqaahe.org/main/events-and-proceedings/inqaahe-2012-forum/presentations>



## 30. We're all going to die, but is it statistically significant?

I particularly like this bit of the article "There are many organisations and individuals peddling statistics in the public domain – Lord knows I am one. Anybody using these statistics needs to be careful; the numbers never speak for themselves. Interpretations need to be based on an understanding of how the data was collected and, in particular, how the questions were framed. This is not always easy to ascertain because private firms are often coy about these issues."

<http://inside.org.au/we-are-all-going-to-die-but-is-it-statistically-significant/>

## 31. How They Really Get In

Most elite colleges and universities describe their admissions policies as "holistic," suggesting that they look at the totality of an applicant -- grades, test scores, essays, recommendations, activities and so forth. But a new survey of admissions officials at the 75 most competitive colleges and universities (defined as those with the lowest admit rates) finds that there are distinct patterns, typically not known by applicants, that differentiate some holistic colleges from others. Most colleges focus entirely on academic qualifications first, and then consider other factors. But a minority of institutions focuses first on issues of "fit" between a college's needs and an applicant's needs.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/04/09/new-research-how-elite-colleges-make-admissions-decisions>



## 32. LAK Conference Roundup

I mentioned the LAK conference previously.

There's a good roundup on this blog

<http://dougcrow.wordpress.com/2012/04/29/lak12-sun-am/>

## 33. Data quality – a never ending story

This is an article from the Altis Consulting blog.  
<http://altis.com.au/data-quality-a-never-ending-story/>

## 34. Score One for the Robo-Tutors

Without diminishing learning outcomes, automated teaching software can reduce the amount of time professors spend with students and could substantially reduce the cost of instruction, according to new research.

In experiments at six public universities, students assigned randomly to statistics courses that relied heavily on "machine-guided learning" software -- with reduced face time with instructors -- did just as well, in less time, as their counterparts in traditional, instructor-centric versions of the courses. This largely held true regardless of the race, gender, age, enrolment status and family background of the students.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/05/22/report-robots-stack-human-professors-teaching-intro-stats>

### 35. The University Has No Clothes

The notion that a college degree is essentially worthless has become one of the year's most fashionable ideas, with two prominent venture capitalists (Cornell '89 and Stanford '89, by the way) leading the charge.

<http://nymag.com/news/features/college-education-2011-5/>



(Photo: Andrew Eccles. Hair by Alejandra/Artists by Timothy Priano for Redken, Benjamin Thigpen/Artists by Timothy Priano. Grooming by Dora Salgado using M.A.C. Cosmetics for Agent Oliver. Makeup by Sylwia Rakowska/Ford Artists using Temptu)

### POSITIONS VACANT

Also check out the Opportunities page on the AAIR website

<http://www.aair.org.au/pages/opportunities>

If you know of any relevant jobs and would like AAIR to advertise them, please email the text to [info@aair.org.au](mailto:info@aair.org.au)



**Senior ETL Developer**  
**Corporate Planning & Performance**  
**HEW8**  
**JCU**

Closes 22 June 2012

Details [here](#)

**Economic Analyst**  
**Group of Eight**

Closes 27 June 2012

<http://www.go8.edu.au/job-opportunities>

## Networking Group for Institutional Research in Australia?

Anne Young (University of Newcastle) and Martin Hanlon (UTS), who are on the Organising Committee for the 2012 Australasian Association for Institutional Research (AAIR) Forum in November, are exploring the idea of establishing a networking group for institutional research in Australian universities.

All university IR groups face similar challenges, and having contact with colleagues in other universities is a great resource, which may not be utilised enough at the moment. One obstacle to networking is that although we all do similar things, there is no "standard" model for University institutional research.

Anne and Martin have been trying to identify the people within Australian universities who are responsible for activities relating to Institutional Research, and some of you will have already received email messages asking if you would be interested. So far, 24 universities have responded to the message, with 23 universities indicating that they would like to participate. Because of the varied structures it's sometimes difficult to identify the right people to contact, so some may have been missed. If you think the idea sounds interesting, please send Anne a quick email ([Anne.Young@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Anne.Young@newcastle.edu.au)).

Further discussion of the idea will take place at the AAIR Forum.



## FOR THE PODDIES, VODDIES AND BLOGGIES

### **1. Contenders cum laude: Universities competing in the global rankings game**

Professor Simon Marginson discusses the increasingly influential phenomenon of global ranking of universities, and what it means for students, governments, researchers, and the business of running institutions of higher learning.

<http://upclose.unimelb.edu.au/episode/195-contenders-cum-laude-universities-competing-global-rankings-game>

### **2. Academic Journals and The Price of Knowledge**

Librarians and academics all over the world are up in arms. They're angry and they're making their displeasure known—they're as mad as hell and they're not going to take it anymore! Why? They're protesting over the cost of academic journals and access to knowledge. And the focus of their anger is the handful of international publishing companies who control the lion's share of the academic publishing market.

Over 12 000 academics have signed the online petition at <http://thecostofknowledge.com/>

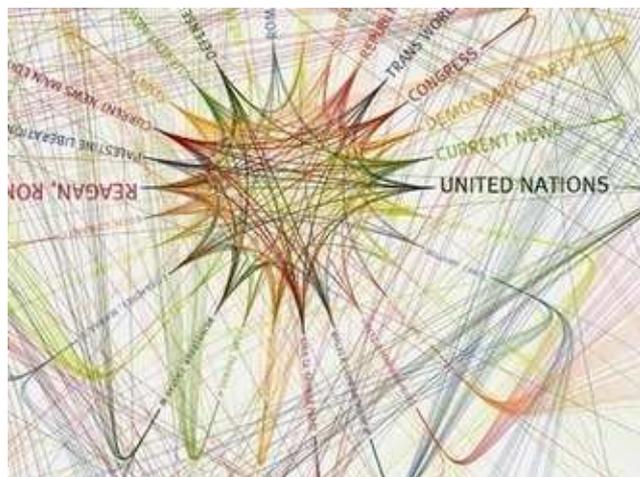
Listen to the Radio National broadcast [here](#)

### **3. Make data more human**

Jer Thorp creates beautiful data visualizations to put abstract data into a human context. At TEDxVancouver, he shares his moving projects, from graphing an entire year's news cycle, to mapping the way people share articles across the internet.

Jer Thorp's work focuses on adding meaning and narrative to huge amounts of data as a way to help people take control of the information that surrounds them.

View the 17min video here



### **4. Bill Massy talks to us about improving productivity in universities**

During his stay in Melbourne recently, Professor Bill Massy (Stanford), talks on camera about his approaches on improving productivity.

View it [here](#)

### **5. National Press Club: Ian Chubb**

Australia's Chief Scientist Ian Chubb addresses the National Press Club with his thoughts on the health of Science in Australia.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-05-24/national-press-club-ian-chubb/4029490>

### **6. Information is food**

How do we consume data? At TED@SXSWi, technologist JP Rangaswami muses on our relationship to information, and offers a surprising and sharp insight: we treat it like food. "Information, if viewed from the point of view of food, is never a production issue. ... It's a consumption issue, and we have to start thinking about how we create diets [and] exercise."

View the 8min video [here](#)

### **7. New approach to teaching at Deakin University**

Vice-Chancellor Jane den Hollander describes how Deakin University in Geelong, west of Melbourne, is changing the way it delivers courses: considering the challenges facing Australia as manufacturing moves away, driven by a high Australian dollar and lower labour costs offshore.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/scienceshow/new-approach-to-teaching-at-deakin-university/3976862>

### **8. Hans Rosling: Religions and babies**

An enjoyable 15mins of video with the delightful and irrepressible Hans Rosling. The question: Do some religions have a higher birth rate than others -- and how does this affect global population growth? Speaking at the TEDxSummit in Doha, Qatar, he graphs data over time and across religions. With his trademark humour and sharp insight, Hans reaches a surprising conclusion on world fertility rates.

In Hans Rosling's hands, data sings. Global trends in health and economics come to vivid life. And the big picture of global development—with some surprisingly good news—snaps into sharp focus.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/hans\\_rosling\\_religions\\_and\\_babies.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_religions_and_babies.html)

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

For more opportunities make sure you check out <http://www.aair.org.au/pages/training-development>

### **Introduction to R Sunday 8 July 2012 University of Adelaide**

This workshop is designed for statisticians and statistical practitioners who have little or no experience with R. R is a free and extremely powerful software environment for statistical computing, data analysis, and graphics. It has become the tool of choice for many statisticians. The R environment is highly flexible and extensible and it contains a wealth of functions to carry out standard and non-standard statistical and graphical analyses.  
<http://www.statsoc.org.au/IntroductiontoR>

### **Master Data Management, Data Quality and Data Governance with William McKnight 23 to 25 July 2012 Altis Consulting, Sydney**

For further details and to register go [here](#)

### **Dimensional Modeling in Depth with Kimball University 11 to 14 September 2012 Altis Consulting Melbourne**

For further details and to register go [here](#)

### **ETL Architecture in Depth with Kimball University 17 to 20 September 2012 Altis Consulting Melbourne**

This course makes sure that you understand all the factors necessary for effectively designing the back room of a data warehouse that can gracefully evolve over time as your needs mature and new technologies become available. For further details and to register go [here](#)

### **Design and Analysis of Surveys 20 to 25 September 2012 Melbourne**

This 4 day course is offered by the Statistical Consulting Centre at the University of Melbourne. The four days are deliberately arranged so that there is a weekend break during the course. The course covers the principles and practice of designing surveys, and the analysis of data from them.  
<http://www.scc.ms.unimelb.edu.au/das.html>

### **Integrated R Workshop 26 to 28 September 2012**

#### **Melbourne**

Three back-to-back one day workshops are being offered designed to introduce the R statistical programming language. You can choose any combination of the 3 workshops.  
<http://www.scc.ms.unimelb.edu.au/irw.html>



### **Retention 101: A Strategic Workshop On Student Success 22 to 23 October 2012 Scottsdale, Arizona**

EPI's Retention 101 workshop provides an exclusive resource-rich environment for groups and individuals from institutions of higher education to work with select experts in their field to design solutions around their institution's current issues in the areas of college access, success, and preparation for the workforce.  
[http://educationalpolicy.org/events/2012/R101\\_Scottsdale/main.html](http://educationalpolicy.org/events/2012/R101_Scottsdale/main.html)

### **Statistics for Research Workers (SPSS) 6 days: 7 - 14 November 2012 Melbourne**

This very popular course gives a basic understanding of statistical ideas and methods involved in carrying out research. Statistical topics covered will include estimation, hypothesis testing, regression and inference based on the normal distribution. This is a six day course, and the timetable is deliberately arranged so that there is a weekend break during the course.  
<http://www.scc.ms.unimelb.edu.au/srw.html>

### **Short courses in statistics at Swinburne Various dates, Semester 2, 2012**

Swinburne University of Technology offers a wide range of full-time and part-time postgraduate units of study and programs in statistics, ideal for market and social research professionals.  
<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/lss/areas/short-course-statistics.html>



## Visual Business Intelligence Workshop with Stephen Few

14 to 16 November 2012, Sydney  
19 to 21 November 2012, Melbourne  
Altis Consulting

We are often overwhelmed by information, not because there is too much, but because we don't know how to tame it.

Computers speed the process of information handling, but they don't tell us what the information means or how to communicate its meaning to decision makers. These skills are not intuitive; they rely largely on analysis and presentation skills that must be learned.

Stephen's insights and material on effective analysis and presentation are based upon the research completed for his three books.

For further details and to register, go [here](#) for Sydney and [here](#) for Melbourne.

## RESOURCES

### A guide for using statistics for evidence based policy

Amazing what you find when searching for something else...

What is evidence-based decision making?

Explanation on the site including "Evidence based decision making requires a systematic and rational approach to researching and analysing available evidence to inform the policy making process. It 'helps people make well informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence from research at the heart of policy development and implementation.' (Davies, 2004: 3)"

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1500.0>

### Two Lists You Should Look at Every Morning

Not exactly a resource but something you may want to think about doing. THE HBR blog article is available [here](#)

## DISTRACTIONS

### The Pirate University

The Pirate University is a site built to allow students who don't have access to up-to-date academic resources (publications) to ask students who have to help them out.

<http://www.pirateuniversity.org/content/pirate-university>

### Whackademia: An insider's account of the troubled university

Possible option on your book reading list?

Go [here](#)

There's an interview on Radio National with the author Richard Hil. Listen to it [here](#)



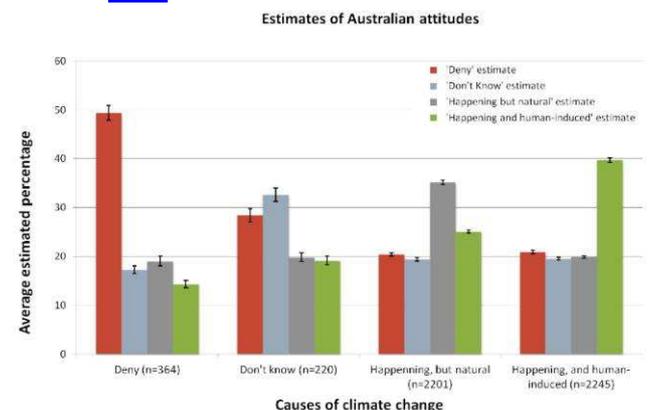
Photo: Lee Besford

### Gen Y shuts door on open-plan century

Having moved to a very grey open office in January and finding myself gravitating to the large staff room upstairs that's set up with small tables, couches etc with a variation of colours (and lots of natural light), I can relate to this article in The Age [here](#).

### I can change your mind about (other people's minds about) climate change

Very interesting graphs in this article related to Australians' beliefs about others' beliefs View it [here](#)



## **The Death of Facts In An Age Of 'Truthiness'**

"According to columnist Rex Huppke, there was a recent death that you might have missed. It wasn't an actor, musician or famous politician, but facts." This is the start to a story on NPR which you can read or listen to [here](#)

## **Our bloated cult of efficiency: doing the wrong thing right**

The idea that improving efficiency makes sustainability problems worse seems counter-intuitive. But what if aiming to do more with less is actually doing the wrong thing right? If sustainability is our concern, this is almost always the case.

Read The Conversation article [here](#)



## **Perspective is everything**

The circumstances of our lives may matter less than how we see them, says Rory Sutherland. At TEDxAthens, he makes a compelling case for how reframing is the key to happiness. "Reality isn't a particularly good guide to human happiness."

View the 18min video [here](#)

## **The Scale of the Universe**

Following on from the theme of perspective, the following web link opens up a fantastic graphic which cleverly shows the scale of various things. The graphic increases or decreases in scale with a mouse scroll, or click on a graphic for more information.

<http://htwins.net/scale2/?bordercolor=white>

## **LIGHT RELIEF**

## **You Are Not Special Commencement Speech from Wellesley High**

Note that Wellesley High is considered one of the top high schools in the USA. The speaker is an English teacher at the school.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfxYhtf8o4>

I didn't know where to put this snippet from Rob Sheehan, but decided it must be light relief. No offense ATO....

## **Australian Tax Office video competition**

Yep – the staid old ATO is running a video competition, inviting entries from students enrolled at an Australian university and who are in their final year or semester of study. Sometimes the bureaucracy is stranger than fiction. The competition is part of the ATO's youth engagement strategy.

<http://www.ato.gov.au/videocomp>

## **AND JUST REMEMBER...**

*"The number of children is not growing any longer in the world. We are still debating peak oil, but we have definitely reached peak child."*

*Hans Rosling*

## **AAIR Committee – 2012**

### **President:**

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Don Johnston – Institutional Research Officer, Southern Cross University

Sally Nimon, Deputy Director: Reporting & Analytics, University of Canberra

Kathie Rabel, Manager, Institutional Analysis, Victoria University of Wellington

**Deadline** for submissions to the August - September 2012 AAIR e-Newsletter is Friday 27 July 2012. Send items to [editor@air.org.au](mailto:editor@air.org.au)

If you're about to change your contact details and still want to receive the Newsletter, please advise [info@air.org.au](mailto:info@air.org.au)

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