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FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT

Changing of the Guard

[...and kia kaha to Australia](#)

The end of 2019 and the start of 2020 have certainly been very volatile around the world in more ways than one.

Close to home, I hope that the effects of the bushfires in Australia have not been too devastating for you personally, although it would be hard to find anyone who hasn't been impacted in some way. A good friend of mine living in Canberra told me that the air quality there was the worst in the world for several days. Both Australian National University and the University of Canberra closed earlier in January due to the poor air quality. The pictures and reports of devastation to peoples' lives, the land, and to animals is heart breaking – it will take years if not decades for people to feel normal again, and maybe there will have to be a new 'normal' for us all to cope.

I hope that at least some of you were able to have a decent Christmas and New Year with family and friends. I think our motto for 2020 will need to be *Kia Kaha!* *Kia Kaha* is a Māori phrase that translates to 'be strong' or 'stay strong' and is meant to convey comfort or solace and also support for the future.

And with the start of the New Year, there are changes planned at the executive level for AAIR. Many of you will know that I have been in the role of Acting President since the 2018 AGM. I am now officially retired from Victoria University of Wellington, and therefore, it seemed appropriate for someone else who is still involved in the tertiary and higher education sectors to step into the acting role. After discussions with the executive committee at the annual forum in Hobart in November 2019, it was agreed the following changes would take place from 1 February 2020:

- Acting President – [Stuart Terry](#), Otago Polytechnic. Stuart has been Vice President since 2018, having been elected to that role at the 2018 AGM. Stuart has had longstanding involvement with AAIR.
- Acting Vice President – [Don Johnston](#), Southern Cross University. Don has been a member of the Executive Committee since 2006 and was Vice President from 2016–18.
- [Secretary](#) – this role remains vacant. I would encourage people to [consider serving in this role](#) either in an acting capacity or by putting yourself forward for election at the 2020 annual forum in Sydney.

More information about the current Committee's composition and responsibilities can be found on the [AAIR website](#).

I hope that 2020 will be a productive and fulfilling year for you all, and that the Australian bushfires extinguish quickly.

Stay safe everyone and *Kia Kaha!*



Kathie Rabel
Acting AAIR President



HOBART RECAP - THE 2019 AAIR ANNUAL FORUM REVISITED

The 2019 AAIR Annual Forum was held at Wrest Point in Hobart from 11–13 November. The organising committee comprised:

- Don Johnston, Southern Cross University
- Greg Jakob, Federation University Australia
- Andrew Bradshaw, Macquarie University

This dynamic team put together a devilishly strong program against the theme, *Institutional Research: The Devil is in the Detail*.



The first day of the Forum was filled with workshops and special interest group meetings. Particularly useful was the update from the Department of Education and Training on Transforming the Collection of Student Information (TCSI), as well as performance-based funding. Also valuable was the update from the [Social Research Centre](#) (SRC) on [QILT](#) (Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching). The day ended with the welcome reception overlooking the Derwent River.

The opening address from Craig Barling, Chief Strategy Officer in the Vice Chancellor's office at the University of Tasmania, talked about why they do things differently and how they try to make a difference at the University of Tasmania. Angel Calderon from RMIT University gave the keynote address of the day about the future direction of higher education and the implications for institutional research and planning.

Parallel sessions followed morning tea and covered such topics as 'Enabling versus sub-bachelor' from Penny Szybiak of Charles Darwin University, and the 'Utilisation of QILT data to enhance the student experience: From big data to big impact' from Cassandra Saunders and Michelle Ye of the University of Tasmania. In the latter presentation, Michelle and Cassandra showed how they took a series of high-level reports and changed them into interactive GOS and SES dashboards. The result was a significantly increased capacity to report on the survey data with the richness of the data being able to be used by colleges and schools to inform strategic plans, recruitment and marketing.

Elvira Fonacier of the University of Technology Sydney talked about how they were able to increase response rates in the Student Experience Surveys (SES). Elvira talked about how UTS used a multipronged approach to improve response rate. This included trying to improve student perceptions, engage with faculties and student organisations, and support leadership in the learning and teaching area to promote QILT. UTS includes information in their student-facing collateral materials and appoint staff as 'champions

for the QILT surveys'. The results were improved response rates and better buy-in from staff on the value of student feedback.

Claire McLean of Central Queensland University talked about ethics when using student data in analytics. Supporting low SES students is a priority for CQUniversity, particularly in relation to HEPPP. Given that there are smaller groups involved in HEPPP programs, data reidentification can be a concern. Data reidentification occurs when a set of anonymous data can be linked back to the individual subject that provided it. CQUniversity is working to improve its process and increase its capabilities in using analytics in the best way possible. The University is developing best practice models for student data governance.

'Automation of routine reporting with R Markdown' was Stewart Craig's (Monash University) topic. He showed how they were able to use R Markdown to automate reports to both static reports and to dashboards. They found that this meant that errors were reduced, reports were easy to recreate, and overall reporting was improved.

One of the last sessions of the day was from Kubra Chambers and Tany Gupta of the University of Sydney on developing predictive capabilities for institutional researchers. The University of Sydney wanted to improve their capability in predicting student enrolments, load and revenue forecasting. Using Oracle PBCS, they were able to develop a smart tool called SPIRE (Smart Predictive Insights for Revenue and Enrolment), which has solved a critical problem for the university.

The day ended with the Forum dinner which started with a wonderful boat cruise down the Derwent before returning to Wrest Point. The 1920s theme was certainly embraced by many, and as usual, not only was the food very good but the socialising and dancing certainly added to the success of the night.



The final day of the Forum was also very busy. Stuart Terry of Otago Polytechnic talked about using data to support diversity and inclusion. Creating an environment where people are able to bring their 'whole selves' is a key factor in being able to attract and retain the best people. In 2016, Otago Polytechnic received the [Rainbow Tick](#), which is an accreditation designed to demonstrate LGBTTIQ+ inclusive practices and service delivery in the workplace. Using institution data allowed Otago Polytechnic to clearly demonstrate improvements in LGBTTIQ+ inclusion and staff wellbeing at an institutional level. This led to the organisation receiving a nationally recognised [Rainbow Excellence Award for Programme, Policy and Practice](#).



Dean Ward of Edith Cowan University (ECU) also talked about diversity and equity and changing the way we view students from broad sociological groups to detailed individual intersections. The framework for the collection of Australian Higher Education Diversity and Equity Information was considered innovative and ahead of its time when it was developed about 30 years ago; however, because it had not evolved over the years it was no longer meeting ECU's needs. ECU developed a new, modernised methodology to meet its changing needs.



Tessy Jolly of the University of Sydney (USyd), along the Ken Yul Lee of Cubane Consulting, talked about how USyd uses UniForum data to analyse feedback and set targets in transformative projects. USyd has embarked on a multiyear professional services transformation programme targeting multiple functions. By using the data from UniForum, the university was able to benchmark itself against other institutions in the higher education sector, and identify critical pain points, service gaps, and delivery costs. Workshops were held with functional areas. The richness of the data available allowed them to pinpoint areas for focus and improvement.

Some of the final presentations of the day included Rosie Williams who talked about The University of Melbourne's Strategic Planning Cycle and how they integrate strategy and planning in the process. The University of Melbourne's strategic framework considers strategy, risk, planning and performance, at both the whole-of-institution and at the divisional level. The planning cycle tries to ensure that there is alignment between university objectives and divisional priorities. Rosie was able to explain how the process works, how evidence is used to underpin decision-making, and the challenges of implementing an integrated cycle.

Zaneta Park of Massey University showed how she was able to automate and customise Word documents using R. Massey University needed to create customised results for each of their undergraduate courses. The system needed to be easy to use and include data from multiple sources. By using the WordR software they were able to create reports that both met the needs of staff and were easily replicated.

The winner of the Best Presenter Award was Shane Compton—with credit given to his colleagues Benjamin Phillips and Paul Lavrakas from the Social Research Centre—for his presentation on 'Using loss framing to optimise response in the context of the Graduate Outcomes Survey – an experimental trial'.

The Best New Presenter Award went to Gimwah Sng and Shane Smith, also of the Social Research Centre, for their presentation on 'Graduate employment destination – exploring the relationships between study area, occupation and industry of employment'.

Congratulations to each of our award winners!

As usual, our sponsors and exhibitors are an important part of the Forum. The 2019 Annual Forum sponsors included:

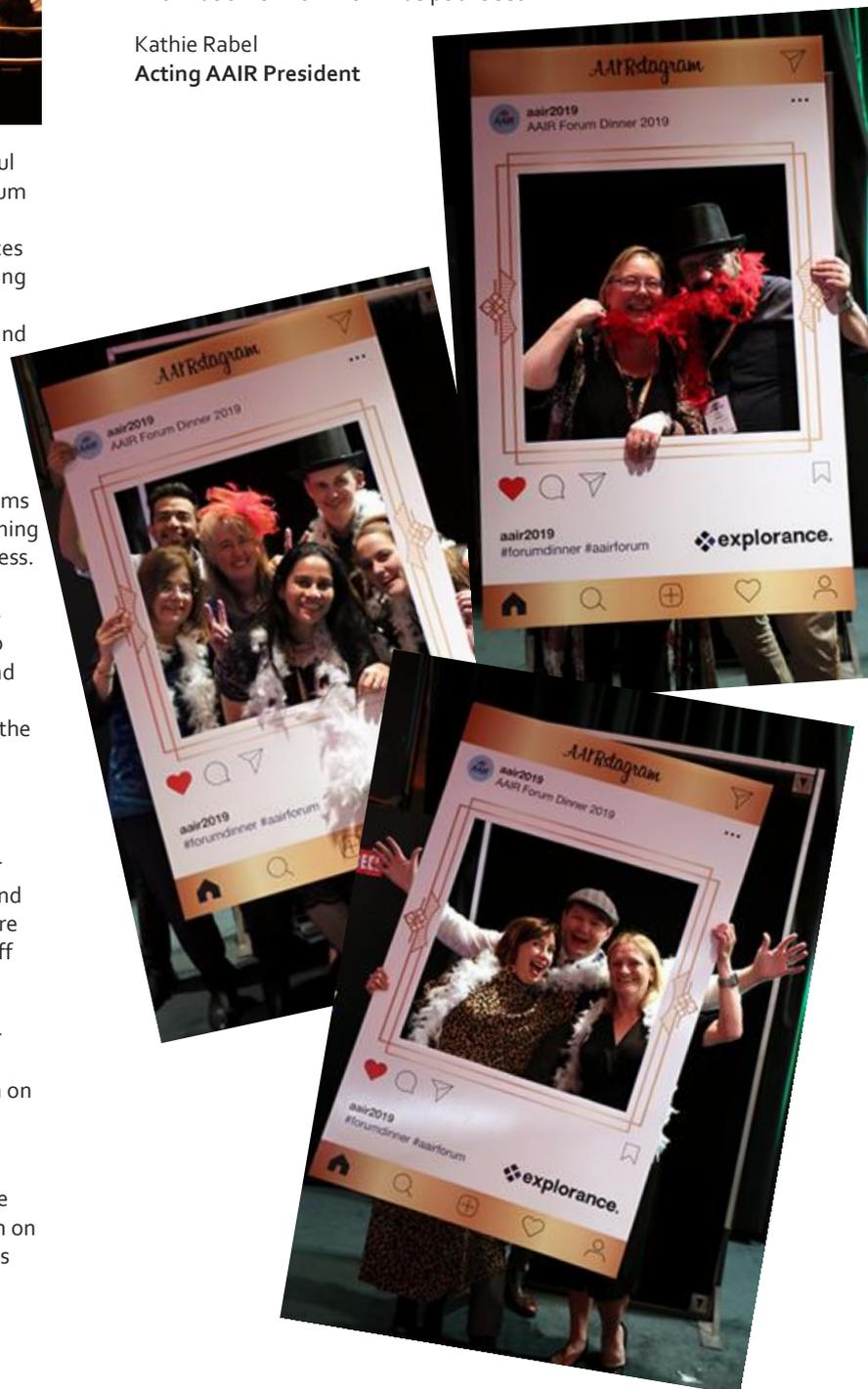
- Explorance: Platinum Sponsor – Forum Dinner
- QILTL: Silver Sponsor – Welcome Reception
- Watermark: Silver Sponsor – Delegate Name Badge
- University of Tasmania: Bronze Sponsor – Refreshment Break

Exhibitors included Altis Consulting, Explorance, QILT and Watermark.

At the AAIR AGM held during the Forum, the Executive Committee said farewell David Carroll (Monash University) and welcomed Eva Seidel (Flinders University) as the new Sales, Marketing and Promotional Materials portfolio leader. Also during the AGM, I was honoured to be awarded [life membership to AAIR](#).

The next AAIR Annual Forum has been confirmed for Sydney later in 2020. Dates and details are yet to be confirmed, but once information is known it will be publicised.

Kathie Rabel
Acting AAIR President



EDITORIAL

In the first issue for 2020, I would like to introduce [Liz Hemsley](#), Strategy and Planning Advisor at La Trobe University, in a short interview.

As our niche field is developing and growing, I look forward to meeting and introducing new and emerging institutional researchers through the Institutional Researcher's Corner.

While we may have taken down our Christmas decorations, let's keep the lights on (in lieu of burning a candle) a bit longer for those whose lives have been lost or who have been affected in other ways by the horrendous bushfires in Australia these past few months.

To the SES staff, firefighters, volunteers and many more unsung heroes, we say 'thank you'. These special people have sacrificed and continue to dedicate their time to this cause. They have fought so hard to save our lands, houses, wildlife and livestock. We too have had to be resilient, but should also feel heartened as we move into this new decade.

Lizzie
Newsletter Editor

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

[Leading universities mobilise to assist bushfire victims](#): Australia's leading universities are mobilising to provide immediate support to students, families, communities and businesses hit by the bushfire crisis. In the short term, the universities have offered to provide everything from financial support to students affected by the fires and on-campus accommodation for displaced families, to agistment for livestock, trauma support for first responders and specialised medical care for burn victims. In the medium and long term, the universities have offered to liaise with the government via the Group of Eight to provide expertise in rebuilding communities, industries, economies and on climate science (Nick O'Malley, *the Brisbane Times*, 11 Jan 2020).

[Operators of cheating services face jail under new law](#): Cheats selling their services to Australian university students will face fines or be jailed under new laws introduced to parliament. Australia's Minister for Education Dan Tehan, introducing the bill, said the bill is aimed at commercial cheating services, not the students who use them (Geoff Maslen, UWN, 5 Dec 2019).

[NZ Universities hit out at planned export crackdown](#): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has just finished a consultation process for proposed changes to "catch-all" export controls, which cover items not on a strategic goods list but that could be used by a police force, militia or armed forces in weaponry. New Zealand universities have come out firing against the proposals, describing them as "unworkable" in a public submission. (Sam Sachdeva, Newsroom, 20 Nov 2019).

Ranking and rating

[Constructing a ranking of higher education institutions based on equity: is it possible or desirable?](#) This paper presents findings from a research project which aimed to rank Australian higher education institutions on their 'equity performance'; that is, the extent to which they were accessible for, supportive of and benefiting students traditionally under-represented in higher education. The study comprised a conceptual consideration of how higher education equity might be defined and empirically measured, drawing on extant scholarly research as well as observations from key stakeholders, including equity

practitioners, researchers, policymakers and higher education executives and institutional planners. Based on these findings, a theoretical framework for higher education equity performance was constructed, and performance indicators identified and subjected to systematic assessment for real-world application. The ensuing ranking system was populated with institutional data from the 37 public universities in Australia. The findings from this analysis indicate that a ranking system may not be the optimal method for assessing higher education equity performance and highlights the subjective nature of both higher education equity and higher education ranking systems (Tim Pitman & Daniel Edwards, Liang-Cheng Zhang, Paul Koshy & Julie McMillan, Higher Education, Jan 2020).

International News

[Create a Positive Revenue Stream with Conference Planning Services](#): All universities are interested in creating alternative revenue streams and fortunately, Continuing Education divisions are primed and ready to take on that challenge. Conference Planning is an important revenue stream that can also bring brand awareness, notoriety, and prestige to a university (Patti Spaniola, The EvOLLution, 10 Jan).

[University of Pittsburgh Grant to Boost Minority Researchers](#): An initiative will pair black and Latino educators with learning scientists to examine best practices and create an advisory group of school districts, colleges and universities, museums and education tech companies. The goal of the initiative is to bring the viewpoints of educators and students of color to the foreground in educational research and development. Those voices and experiences are often marginalized (Andrew Goldstein, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 13 Jan).

[CUNY launches tech mentoring program targeting small businesses](#): The City University of New York (CUNY) has launched an emerging tech mentoring program targeting small businesses owned by veterans, minorities and women. A \$100,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation will fund the creation of the program that targets 250 small businesses throughout New York City, enabling entrepreneurs to take courses at five CUNY colleges, including the College of Staten Island (CSI) (stefanieb, UB, 12 Jan).

[Back to basics: universities now offer 'adulting' classes](#): Adulting classes for



college students and postgrads have swelled in popularity in recent years, in part because many high schools have abandoned 'life skills' courses such as home economics, which were created to help students navigate the path to adulthood. According to many of the students, their parents emphasised academic achievement to the exclusion of almost everything else. As a result, universities are filled with students who aced their AP physics test but have no idea how to cook pasta without turning it into mush (Hannah Fry, the Los Angeles Times, 11 Jan 2020).

'Guys ask for more money': why female-led startups underperform: Male culture and a lack of role models are stopping female academics from launching companies based on their research (Harriet Swain, the Guardian, 8 Jan 2020).

A new manifesto for UK international education: As the various political parties in the United Kingdom campaign on their election manifestos, it is worth considering a new Manifesto for UK International Education. Manifestos can be short-sighted and intended to grab headlines with reductions in taxes and increases in spending to appeal to voters. In the same way tuition fee discounts, usually dressed up as 'scholarships', are introduced by institutions to recruit students. Alongside these are the parade of honorary graduates, Nobel prize-winning lecturers and hand-picked alumni to add lustre to the prospectus (Louise Nicol, UWN, 7 Dec 2019).

Going digital – A big challenge for universities: Around the world traditional, campus-based universities are facing headwinds as they try to expand student enrolment. The challenge is especially acute in more advanced developing countries where the college-age population is shrinking for the first time due to decreasing birth rates. In addition, the rise of the gig economy and the decline of lifelong professions are leading some young people to wonder if the classic four-year campus college degree is still worth it. If we can keep the focus on increasing the quantity and quality of higher education, the future will be bright (Alejandro Caballero, UWN, 30 Nov 2019).

Moving from rhetoric to action on widening access to HE: As we approach the second World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED) on 26 November, the evidence suggests that, while there is a growing community of institutions and individuals taking forward innovative approaches to widening access to higher education across the world,

deeper global commitments across the sector are lacking. Alongside this year's WAHED, we will be delivering our first global capacity-building course, which is supported by the Asia-Europe Foundation. It will bring together 30 colleagues from across sectors to participate in an intensive course designed to kick-start the formation of a global cohort of change-makers in the equitable access area. (Graeme Atherton, UWN, 23 Nov 2019)

Economics is not the only reason for Canadian's HE internationalisation: The Canadian government recently released Building on Success: International Education Strategy (2019-2024), a comprehensive plan for growing the international education sector in Canada. The new strategy aims to develop the country's international education sector by increasing international student flows from non-traditional sending countries, by expanding study abroad and intercultural learning opportunities for Canadian and permanent resident students and by ensuring there is both class and cultural diversity among the international student population. (Abu Kamara, UWN, 23 Nov 2019).



Photo: iStock

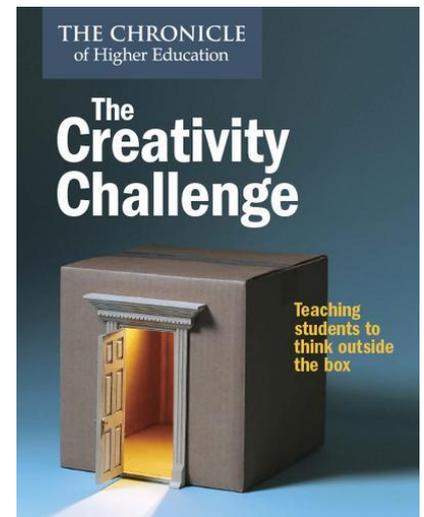
How to Prepare for Grad School: 32 Tips for Undergrad Students: When you thinking about continuing your education after completing an undergraduate degree, how can you start preparing for grad school during your undergrad?

This piece asked deans, professors, and program directors to answer the following question: If an undergraduate student approached you for advice about how they could start preparing for graduate school, what is one tip you would share with them? Thirty-two deans, professors, and program directors contributed to this article with their best advice on preparing for grad school (the GraduateSchoolsite.com, 24 April 2019)

LEARNING & TEACHING

The Creativity Challenge Teaching Students To Think Outside the Box: This Chronicle issue brief examines

how colleges can help students develop creative skills that will help them in their academic careers and beyond. Designed for administrators and faculty members alike, it serves as a primer on why creativity is important, how students can develop it, and what higher education might look like if faculty members were to encourage creativity in every discipline and in every course.



Texas universities see boom in online enrolment: Nearly a quarter of UT students took an online class in 2018, up more than 80% from 2015. It's a big leap for the school, but it's not alone: across the country, hundreds of colleges are increasing their offering of online courses, encouraging students to take advantage of the convenience and flexibility that comes with "distance education." Recently released federal data show 34.7% of all college students in the country took at least one online class in the fall of 2018. Many local universities said they plan to expand online courses in the future. As technology becomes more sophisticated, educators expect to see more universities and students embrace online learning (Lara Korte, <https://www.gosanangelo.com>, 12 Jan).

Online enrollment grows at Texas colleges

The number of students enrolling in online classes has been steadily increasing for years. Schools say the classes are more convenient and flexible than traditional courses.

School	Total online 2018	Percent change 2015-2018	Online enrollees as a proportion of total enrollment
Concordia University Texas	1,394	57%	54%
Austin Community College	11,748	19%	29%
Texas State University	10,782	86%	28%
UT Austin	12,700	81%	25%
Huston-Tillotson University	166	60%	15%
St. Edwards University	161	15%	4%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

GANNETT

University of Florida provides real career paths around games: UF's Digital Worlds Institute and other Florida schools are leveraging new technology and intense instruction to help students land in dream jobs, including esports. Ultimately, the



Digital Worlds program is preparing students for the future by allowing them to pursue something they love. It's something many educators and parents are still gun-shy about embracing (Chris Burt, UB, 3 Jan 2020).



[Will Online Classes Become the New Front in College Cheating?](#) For months, the nationwide college cheating scandal had been about rich parents, including Silicon Valley executives and Hollywood actresses, buying their children's way into elite universities. This week, there was a twist: A mom charged with buying her son's way out of a coveted school — with a college degree. The case of Newport Beach socialite Karen Littlefair paying \$9,000 for a surrogate to complete online courses for her son has exposed another university fraud control weakness as well as what experts have argued is a particular vulnerability in the surging realm of remote online learning. (John Woolfolk, The Mercury News, 16 Dec 2019).



Photo: Shutterstock

[How analytics is changing the game for sports—and academia:](#) Students are putting big data to use to boost engagement, revenue. Big data has given rise to new opportunities, both in academia and business. Take the Center for Sports Analytics at Samford University in Homewood, Alabama, which offers a new sports analytics major. Students use big data to answer pressing business questions about sports teams: Who are their audiences? How do they engage them? How can they turn that engagement into real revenue opportunities? This new field of study is remarkable in two ways. First, it was developed specifically to help sports organizations drive team efficiencies and

increase revenue. Second, the students are using big data and a suite of tools to deliver actionable insights to real sports organizations. It's not academic to them; it's real. (Darin W. White, 11 Dec 2019)



[You can't teach creativity, but can you learn it?](#) It is broadly accepted that, with 'Industry 4.0' in full swing, the employment landscape is changing. Increasingly, jobs are at risk of automation. Certainly, teachers like myself are not immune, with scripted artificial intelligence or AIs already being used to deliver taught content to students. More generally, those I am teaching, and many people my own age, are looking forward to multiple-career lifetimes — each built on a raft of transferable skills. For these reasons, I have been working on a series of award-bearing and non-award-bearing courses at the University of Cambridge's Institute of Continuing Education aimed at developing the most in-demand soft skills, in particular creativity. (Alex Carter, UWN, 7 Dec 2019).

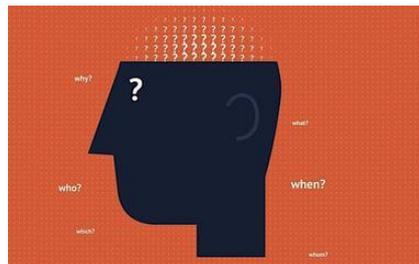


Photo: iStock

['The Netflixisation of academia': is this the end for university lectures?](#) Universities are increasingly recording lectures, but academics are wary of being spied on or made obsolete: The problem is that each university has different policies when it comes to lecture recording. A survey of 35 UK institutions by Nordmann and colleagues found that 11 had staff opt in to recording, 19 required staff to opt out, and four had different approaches depending on individual schools. But the evidence is that students don't want a teacherless classroom (Chris Stokel-Walker, the Guardian, 4 Dec 2019).



[The rise of EduTube: how social media influencers are shaping universities:](#) YouTube is becoming an increasingly important platform for universities. Videos posted by the 20 universities with the highest-viewed content on the site were seen 58.9m times, according to social video measurement platform Tubular Labs; that's only marginally more than the number of views on videos posted by independent influencers about universities (49.2m). And it's a growing space: university-related content posted by influencers has seen views increase by 20% in the last year alone. Popular vloggers are influencing how students learn and where they study. But are universities keeping up? (Chris Stokel-Walker, the Guardian, 2 Dec 2019)

[Why university lecturers need a teaching certificate:](#) Only few countries make a postgraduate certificate in teaching mandatory for lecturing in a university, although many institutions offer such a certificate on a voluntary basis. There is little practical motivation for either novice graduate students or experienced lecturers to take time out to learn how to teach better. Career advancement, in most cases, is determined by research publications, not inspired teaching. Graduate students would have to take time out from their research for their PhD. Without some form of government intervention these changes just won't happen. However, it is not unreasonable for government to insist on professional standards for teaching, given the cost of higher education. (Tony Bates, UWN, 30 Nov 2019).

Student Retention and Success

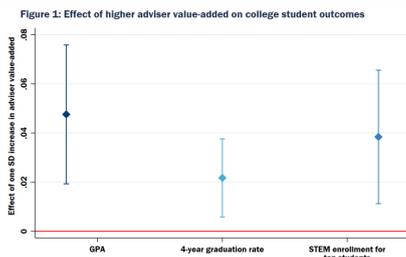
[The University of Rhode Island's student success investments:](#) During the recession last decade, the University of Rhode Island (URI) lost \$26 million in state support over a three-year period. Now, ten years later, URI has turned things around, and although it has yet to recover all its lost funding, it has achieved results that are nothing short of remarkable. The University's transformation involved a host of changes, made after a lengthy, sometimes contentious study of detailed data about the curriculum and student



success. Four areas were emphasized — intensified student advising, increased financial aid, revamped general education requirements and reallocated internal budgets — all with the purpose of improving degree completion. The need to improve student success, particularly for low-income and first-generation students, is taking on greater national urgency (Michael T. Nietzel, Forbes, 13 Jan).



Advice matters: Faculty advisers and college student success: Academics and policymakers are actively looking at creative ways to help college students succeed. While increasing college access and enrollment is an important first stage, too many students matriculate but fail to thrive. Bluntly, too many never graduate. Like most faculty, I have many informal “advising conversations” with undergraduates. I like to think these conversations do some good. I’d never thought much about whether formal advising systems do much and whether they can contribute to overall student success. But there is now some solid evidence that good advising makes a real difference (Dick Startz, Tuesday, Brown Center Chalkboard, 10 Dec).



Rise in Indian students brings increasing challenges: Students from India continue to flood into Australian universities at a greater rate than from any other nation, but their presence is creating growing problems. Among the major issues confronting academics with Indian students in their classes are a too-frequent inadequate command of English and academic misconduct (Geoff Maslen, UWN, 7 Dec 2019).

Student Voice and Experience

Key Takeaways from the Student Engagement Workshop at Coventry University: Coventry University welcomed colleagues from Explorance to host a workshop on the issue of student satisfaction and student engagement. This followed our contribution to the excellent insight report, *The Student Voice: How can UK universities ensure that module evaluation feedback leads to continuous improvement across their institution?* (Professor Guy Daly, 16 Dec 2019).

Why we must ease access to higher education for refugees: Around half of the 65 million refugees and displaced people in the world are over 18 years old. However, only 1% of this group can access higher education, compared to 36% of global youth. Although only 1% are studying at a higher education institution or in training centres, the demand is far greater. A third of refugees are eligible to enter higher education, but due to a lack of equivalency in their qualifications, language barriers, financial problems or a lack of information about the new system, a majority of refugees have to interrupt their education. Therefore, when planning at a state or institutional level, planners should adopt a sensitive approach and promote an environment that eases access, provides guidance and fosters lifelong learning (Aysuhan Tuba Saral, UWN, 14 Dec 2019)

World Access to HE Day – Access needs practical solutions, money: Academics from 15 different countries attending the WAHED summit at the University of Edinburgh. Former coordinator of tertiary education policy at the World Bank, Jamil Salmi, flagged up Australia, Austria, Colombia, South Africa and Vietnam as culturally disparate examples of good higher education access practice, in a world where low income and marginalisation can still determine success in tertiary education studies and work. He said research suggests that Australia has some of the most comprehensive equity policies in the world; Austria pioneers gender policies and support for refugees; and Colombia's student loans and retention policies have developed equity in a country once crippled by insurgency, for instance (Jean West, UWN, 2 Dec 2019).



Photo: WAHED

Staff and Student Wellbeing

Mental health does not discriminate by GPA: Key findings from a recent US-based survey by Active Minds and The National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS) of 9,319 academically high-achieving college students nationwide illustrate the unique needs of these students, and how their universities can better support their mental health while on campus. This comes at a time when depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts are on the rise among college students, according to the national Healthy Minds Study and National College Health Assessment (NCHA). (stefanieb, UB, 15 Jan).

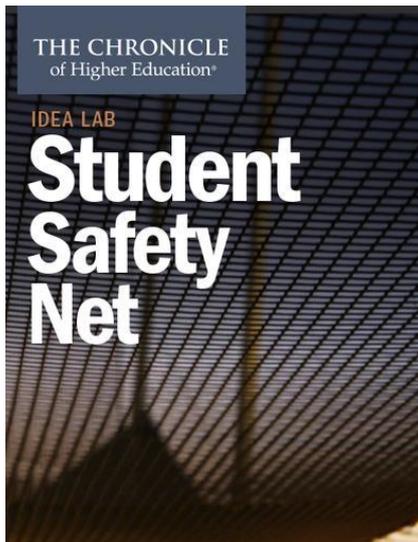
Third of Cambridge University staff 'have experienced bullying': Responses from 3,000 academic and non-academic staff – a quarter of Cambridge's total workforce – found that nearly one in three had either been the victims of bullying and other forms of victimisation or had seen it directed against colleagues in the previous 18 months. The Cambridge survey was jointly conducted by the university and the three main campus unions – Unite, Unison, and the University and College Union. The joint survey's executive summary concluded: “Clearly, significant work and investment is needed to bring about lasting cultural change across the university.” (Richard Adams, the Guardian, 8 Jan 2020).

Student Success Journal published **2019 Special Issue: Psychological Wellbeing and Distress in Higher Education**, this very special issue which includes a collection of articles from scholars and practitioners in Australia, Canada, the US, UK and Germany addressing student (and staff) psychological wellbeing in higher education. Broadly, articles discuss the scope of mental wellbeing and psychological distress, identify specific cohorts (including international students and refugees), profile targeted means of support (via the curriculum, the co-curriculum and strategic policy and planning initiatives) and also identify the



need for 'psychological literacy' via leadership (16 Dec 2019).

Idea Lab: Student Safety Net: This collection of Chronicle articles focuses on how colleges help undergraduates who are homeless or face other tough situations that can disrupt their learning. While the services vary, the goal is the same: make sure these students feel welcomed, are supported, and have their most basic needs met as they strive for a degree.

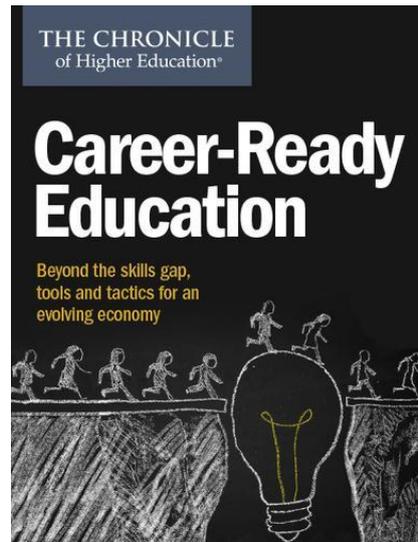


GRADUATE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

The Chronicle's latest roundtable report, [Responding to Workforce Needs: Views on how colleges can partner with employers to teach students 21st-century skills](#): Ensuring that today's graduates have the right set of skills to succeed, college and industry leaders are working together to develop academic programs that are more effective, strategic, and helpful in preparing students for their future careers. However, there are barriers to growth. Faculty are apprehensive about giving control of the curricula to company partners, while employers are looking for a specific set of soft skills that current programming lacks.

Career-Ready Education: This Chronicle report goes beyond the definitions of the skills gap and the accompanying blame game to explore the forces driving change and the challenges ahead. The goal isn't to turn every institution of higher education into a job-training center, but there's no shame in adding relevance. College leaders can prepare career-ready graduates — in both liberal-arts and more-specialized programs — without

dismantling their educational models or compromising their principles.



BIG DATA, BUSINESS ANALYTICS/INTELLEIGENCE

Ethical AI: Five Guiding Pillars: Corporate responsibility is not a new mission, but it has become a more complicated one as machine learning assumes a larger role in how work is done. This white paper, ["Ethical AI: Five Guiding Pillars"](#) provides five actionable ways organizations can re-imagine business models around ethical AI, according to KPMG (insideBigData, 11 Dec 2019)

Ethical AI is about taking action. KPMG has distilled the actions necessary to point an organization toward a "true north" of corporate and civil ethics around AI.



How analytics can help disadvantaged students progress: When the United Kingdom government called on universities to tackle high rates of student dropouts earlier this year, figures illustrated that disadvantaged students were still more likely to drop out of university compared with their more advantaged peers. UCAS statistics have shown that the entry rate of school-leavers from the areas of lowest educational attainment in the UK is still low, meaning that it's less likely that they would have others around them to share

experiences in order to help prepare. Furthermore, this transparency offers a highly sensitive way to shape services and target those students who need support (Richard Gascoigne, UWN, 14 Dec 2019).

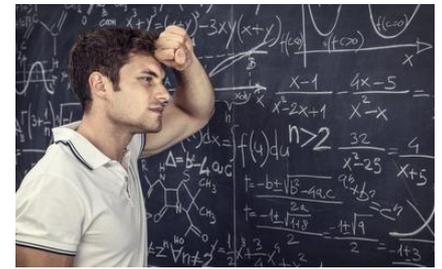


Photo: iStock

Big Data & Higher Education: How Are They Connected? Big data is playing a much bigger role in our choices of colleges and our experiences while there than we probably even realize. Universities are using big data in all sorts of interesting ways that benefit both their profit margins and the students attending the school. Although there are certainly some substantial costs associated with the use of big data in the classroom, many would argue the benefits far outweigh them. Here are just a few of the ways big data is regularly being incorporated to help students become more successful in their learning environments (Avery Phillips, insidebigdata, 28 Nov 2019).

Creating a Balanced Meal of Data: Ian Firth, VP Products at speech-to-text technology specialist Speechmatics, believes that measuring what data intake is needed for an enterprise – like a balanced diet – is key to optimum performance and output. Understanding customer needs and identifying solutions is Ian's top priority. He provides a crucial link between the commercial and engineering teams at speech-to-text technology specialist Speechmatics, ensuring customer requirements are met. Ian has led product development for the past three years, helping the company triple in size in people and revenues. Before joining Speechmatics, he was a product manager within the cloud services group at Citrix (insidebigdata, 24 Nov 2019).

REPORTS, RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

NCVER has released [Statistical report: VET Student Outcomes 2019](#): New data from over 170 000 VET students shows that satisfaction with VET remains high, with 88.1% of graduates and 91.4% of



subject completers satisfied with the overall quality of their training. For VET graduates, 83.9% achieved their main reason for undertaking training, with 85.1% training for employment-related reasons, 11.3% for personal development reasons and 3.6% for further study reasons.

Employment outcomes for VET graduates were also good, with 65.8% having an improved employment status after training, and 46.8% of those who were not employed before training in employment after (NCVER, 12 Dec).

[The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth \(LSAY\)](#) are now available: New data reveals around 69% of Australian 17-year-olds who planned to go to university when they finished school were at university one year later. Results from the survey also give insights into the reasons why some young Australians leave school before graduating, with the most common reason cited being that they had a job, or an apprenticeship or traineeship to go to (NCVER, 9 Dec).

[The dynamics of qualifications: implications for VET:](#) The report uses the Australian Census of Population and Housing to show how tertiary qualification profiles in occupations changed between 2006 and 2016. It reveals an emerging mismatch in terms of the skill level and relevance of qualifications held by workers and the skills required for the occupation, with many workers holding qualifications that notionally exceed the skill requirements for their job. It also reveals that the dynamics of this change are more pronounced for younger workers, and that it has occurred across all major occupational groups, with a corresponding decline in the number and proportion of workers without post-school qualifications (Lisel O'Dwyer, Ian White, 22 Nov).

[Hyper-authorship skews science literature impact analysis:](#) Data resulting from articles with hyper-authorship – beyond 100 authors and-or 30 countries – produces such erratic, even potentially distorting outcomes, that it should be removed from analysis at a national and institutional level, the Web of Science says in a new report titled Multi-authorship and Research Analytics. The report identifies a growing number of research articles with 1,000 or more unique authors across more than 100 different countries. The combination of many authors plus many countries is driving a complex authorship pattern that

differs from more typical academic papers and leads to elevated citation rates (Brendan O'Malley, UWN, 14 Dec 2019)

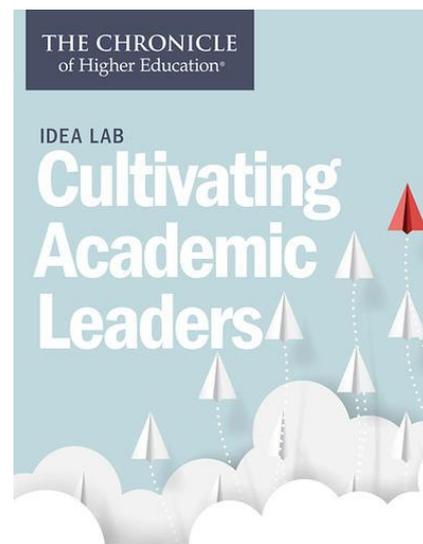
[AIR's recorded webinar: Analysis to Insights: Creative Ways to Present Survey Findings:](#) How can you creatively and effectively communicate insights from survey data? This presentation will highlight three innovative approaches to help IR offices rethink how to report survey results and how to visualize the information to better support decision-making. Examples will feature student and employee survey data presented in:

1. Short and simple "Flash Feedback" reports used for timely decision-making
2. Departmental reports used for annual assessment reviews
3. Institutional reports used to study strengths and challenges for strategic planning.

[Education deserts: How geography impacts access to higher ed:](#) A [new map](#) published by the Jain Family Institute seeks to draw more attention to another college access hurdle: geography. Considering most students go to college close to home, the Institute's researchers have developed the "School Concentration Index" to measure the number of options students have in different parts of the country and how a lack of competition in more rural areas may impact affordability (Matt Zalaznick, UB, 10 Jan).



[Idea Lab: Cultivating Academic Leaders:](#) Higher education is arguably facing more complex challenges than ever before, and the responsibilities of today's leaders seem to be continually increasing. Faculty members, deans, and department chairs have taken on added responsibilities. But how do you ask even more of those who already do so much? How can you inspire a new cohort of academic leaders for tomorrow's challenges? This collection of articles and essays provides guidance on preparing and prepping academic leaders. It offers advice on how to get professors to embrace administrative duties and how to get administrators to become campus decision makers.



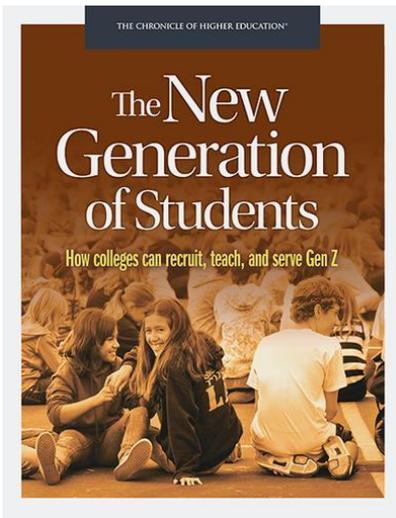
Growth in the number of Chinese students pursuing study in four top destinations – United States, United Kingdom, Canada and Australia – is "slowing significantly", according to a new report. But while Canada and Australia are diversifying their international student populations, the US and UK continue to rely too heavily on China as a source country. [Rethink China: The end of the affair, an inaugural report](#) from the consultancy Education Rethink, says that despite strong growth in outbound student numbers from China, the latest data shows that "the long-predicted end of the Chinese student boom may soon arrive for the US, UK, Canada and Australia".

[The dynamics of qualifications: implications for VET:](#) The report uses the Australian Census of Population and Housing to show how tertiary qualification profiles in occupations changed between 2006 and 2016. It reveals an emerging mismatch in terms of the skill level and relevance of qualifications held by workers and the skills required for the occupation, with many workers holding qualifications that notionally exceed the skill requirements for their job. It also reveals that the dynamics of this change are more pronounced for younger workers, and that it has occurred across all major occupational groups, with a corresponding decline in the number and proportion of workers without post-school qualifications.

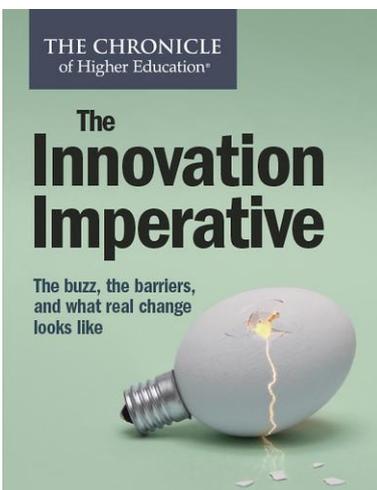
[The New Generation of Students: How Colleges Can Recruit, Teach, and Serve Gen Z:](#) This Chronicle report draws on demographic trends, surveys, front-line observations, and an expanding array of Gen Z books and experts to introduce the new generation to campus leaders.



Details are still emerging, but Gen Z — shaped by the Great Recession and the reign of the smartphone and social media — marks a break from even the recent past. Today's students are more skeptical and money conscious, interested in an education they can apply and focused on the value of a degree. Technology is indispensable to them but not always a net positive, and they may need more in the way of personal development than their predecessors did.



The Innovation Imperative: This Chronicle report examines the rise and establishment of the innovation movement, barriers to change on campuses, and the necessary elements for meaningful progress. Written by two senior Chronicle writers — Goldie Blumenstyk and Lee Gardner — this in-depth resource also features fifteen campus case studies, from “super innovators” setting the standard to colleges following suit to confront a variety of challenges across academe.



ITEMS OF INTEREST

A research team from the University of Pisa seeks your participation in their Data Science Survey. The survey is mainly addressed at those who work every day in the field of data science, either on their own or for a company. The team is led by Professor G. Fantoni and Professor F. Chiarello from the engineering department of the University of Pisa with a focus on making research in this field applicable to the market, focusing in particular on the topic of NLP. [Take the Survey.](#)

ON THE MOVE

Tanya Buchanan is the new chair of NEAS (“quality assurance services for everyone in the English Language Teaching community”).

Colin Higgins becomes director of global programmes at Deakin U.

Rebecca Johnson is moving to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Mark Krstic will step up to become Managing Director. at the Australian Wine Research Institute in Adelaide.

Simon Leunig is to be PVC and president of Curtin U Malaysia.

Sarah O’Shea is the new director of the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, based at Curtin U.

Mark Hoffman will leave UNSW to become DVC A at the University of Newcastle, in March.

Jacqueline Lo is appointed as new Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) at the University of Adelaide.

Annabelle Duncan is the new board chair of the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship. The SCC is a collaboration of all NSW universities and the state’s TAFE.

Michelle Baddeley will be associate dean for R&D in the business school at UTS.

Peter Radoll moves up from dean to PVC at Uni Canberra, leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership and Strategy.

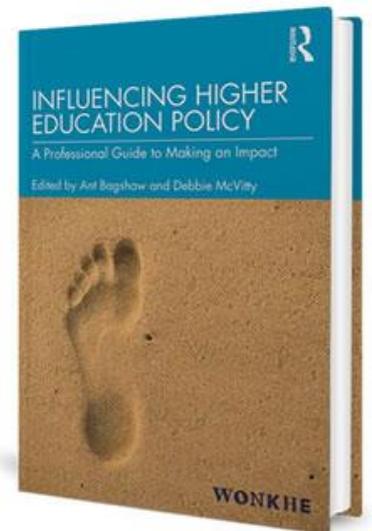
Andrew Vincent joins Australian Catholic U as director, digital education.

Sharon Bell moves to ANU at end December to become interim dean of the College of Asia and the Pacific

Deborah Terry will become VC of Uni Queensland in August 2020.

Ross McLennan is to be Griffith U’s director of the research office. He is also the new president of the Australasian Research Management Society.

GOOD READS



[Influencing higher education policy: A professional guide to making an impact](#)

Editors: Ant Bagshaw & Debbie McVitty

Buy Now

Placing focus on professional aspects, and with practical examples bringing to light experiences, insights, and recommendations across policy and public affairs, this book is divided into three sections. It covers concepts and theories for policy influence, regulation and the role of government, and institutions’ engagement with policy.



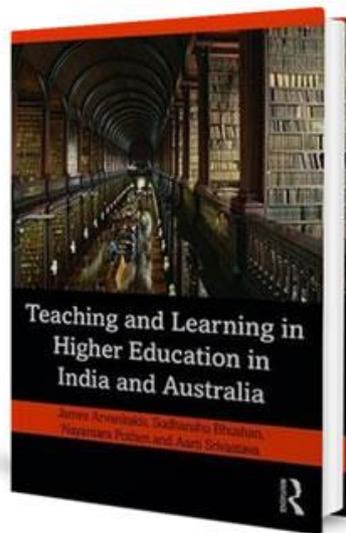


[Shared Governance : A More Meaningful Approach in Higher Education](#)

Perry R. Rettig

Buy Now

Shared Governance begins with the premise that today's higher education governance practices have lost their focus and vitality. By re-examining the original suppositions of shared governance, along with an infusion of seminal democratic values and principles, a contemporary model is envisioned. From historical perspectives on shared governance, the book then takes a view of current governance models through the lens of Critical Theory and Open Systems Thinking. Political, corporate, and school system models are briefly reviewed before moving on to application to colleges and universities.

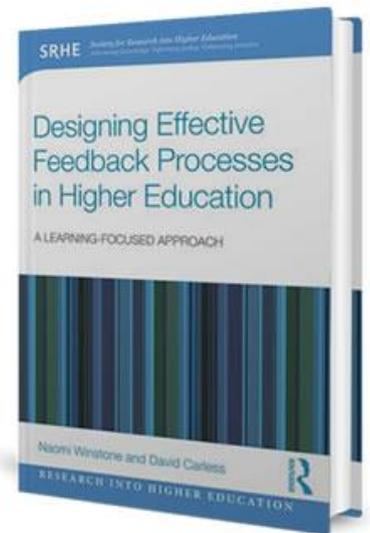


[Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in India and Australia](#)

Editors: James Arvanitakis, Bhushan Sudhanshu , Pothen Nayantara , and Srivastava Aarti

Buy Now

By using case studies from India and Australia the volume tries to look at the possibility of cross cultural collaboration in learning and teaching. Comprehensive and resourceful this book will be useful for scholars and researchers of education, higher education, sociology, public policy and political studies and also for NGOs and think tanks working in these areas.



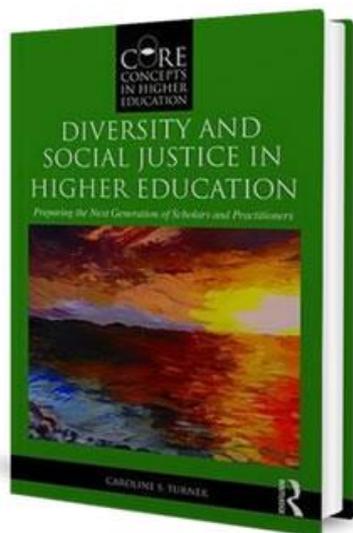
[Designing Effective Feedback Processes in Higher Education : A Learning-Focused Approach](#)

Naomi Winstone & David Carless

Buy Now

Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement, yet it is difficult to implement productively within the constraints of a mass higher education system. Designing Effective Feedback Processes in Higher Education: A Learning-Focused Approach addresses the challenges of developing effective feedback processes in higher education, combining theory and practice to equip and empower educators. It places less emphasis on what teachers do in terms of providing commentary, and more emphasis on how students generate, make sense of, and use feedback for ongoing improvement.





Diversity and Social Justice in Higher Education : Preparing the Next Generation of Scholars and Practitioners

Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner

Buy Now

Diversity and Social Justice in Higher Education brings together firsthand narratives and current literature to examine social justice in colleges and universities. Drawing on her own experiences moving from farm laborer to 30-year veteran of academia, the author engages and challenges higher education masters and PhD students to examine the role of social justice in their lives and future careers. Through the achievements and continued persistence of other students, faculty, and administrators who successfully address social justice issues in practice, readers learn how to promote social justice in their own universities, communities, and society.

POSITIONS VACANT

Looking for a change?
Want to list a job?
Visit our Jobs Board.

Jobs Board

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

See our [Training and Development](#) webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.

[Transforming the Collection of Student Information](#)



Visit the [TCSI Webinar Gallery](#) for the latest webinar recordings.

[The Data School](#)

The Data School has launched in Australia! The Data School is a paid two-year long immersive course which will create the next generation of great data analysts and consultants. Over the last twenty-six years, the team at MIP Australia have worked with leading organisations to provide data and analytics consulting services. We have also trained thousands of people to use Tableau and Alteryx.

[Data Science Melbourne](#)

This is a group for anyone interested in 'Data Science'. We are not quite sure what the exact definition of a Data Scientist is, but if you deal with something generally related to converting data into useful insight then you will hopefully benefit from joining the group. Please follow the link to join in the group and [follow the events posted on Meetup](#).

[AIR Webinars](#)

AIR provides online resources, innovative practices, professional development opportunities, and training for AIR members and non-members and the higher education community, including professionals from IR, effectiveness, assessment, planning, and related fields.

[Webinar: Project-Based Learning \(PBL\) as a Vehicle for High-Impact Practices: Reinventing Programs](#)

Tuesday, 4 Feb (2–3pm ET)

Creating a valuable educational experience for undergraduates in the 21st century is complicated. Students need to learn how to solve problems, think critically, work effectively on teams, and communicate well, and it's up to higher ed institutions to keep

students engaged and help them persist through to graduation. The hour-long second instalment in the three-part complimentary webinar series will explore how senior campus leaders and professors can reinvent opportunities for creating successful students by using project-based learning in service of high-impact practices. Audience takeaways from the webinar will include fresh ideas on how to use project-based learning to help both faculty and students think more critically, creatively, and innovatively, and, ultimately, learn more deeply.

STUDENT SERVICES AND AMENITIES FEE 2020 WORKSHOP



5 March 2020
Melbourne, Australia

Student services and amenities workshop will be offered at the CQ University campus on Spencer Street. Agenda items and Speakers are being canvassed by seminar coordinator Trevor Gerdsen from the University of Newcastle.

CSBA / ATEM 2020 Pre-SSCC Workshop



June 2020
Wellington NZ

In conjunction with the SSCC each year, Customer Service Benchmarking Australia (CSBA) offers a benchmarking program and pre-conference workshop. In its 12th year, the program is highly regarded across the sector for providing education institutions with an in-depth understanding of their future student experience.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Here is a selection of upcoming events that may be of interest. See our [Events/Fora](#)

webpage for more national and international events.

International graduate employability: Making good on the promise

28 January 2020
London, United Kingdom

International graduate employability is moving up the agenda. Global competitors such as New Zealand and Australia have made it central to their internationalisation efforts, and it is a key strand of the UK government's new international education strategy. The employability outcomes of our graduates are increasingly essential for the competitive advantage of the UK's higher education sector. Now UK has the post study work visa argued for so long, how do we make sure that universities have the support in place to help our international graduates secure good jobs, in the UK, in their home countries, or elsewhere?

Degree Apprenticeships 2020 Conference

5 February 2020
London, United Kingdom



2019 saw increased sector and media focus on degree apprenticeships, with UUK publishing a report dedicated to the topic. Building on this momentum and work, UUK is hosting a one-day event bringing together sector experts and practitioners to take an in-depth look at the developments and future of degree apprenticeships.

2020 Higher Education Analytics Online Conference



12 February 2020
11am – 3pm ET

This online conference features a dozen of 10-minute sessions presented by higher ed professionals working in institutions just like yours — with real

analytics solutions to real higher ed problems. This conference is THE annual event for higher ed analytics professionals and digital teams interested in data-driven decisions to help advance their school.

Gartner Data & Analytics Summit



17–18 February 2020
Sydney, Australia

Rewire Your Culture for an AI-Augmented Future

At Gartner Data & Analytics Summit, we will show you how to address the challenges we know you are facing. Drawing on new strategies, expert guidance and best practices, we will help you understand how to lead and empower. In this new reality, data and analytics leaders must rewire and rethink the core of their organization's culture in order to drive the transformation needed to propel their organizations forward into a successful, AI-augmented future.

Enhancing the student experience



27 February 2020
Woburn House, Tavistock Square
London, United Kingdom

This one-day conference hosted by Universities UK will bring together sector leaders to look at how the sector can enhance the student experience in a drastically fast-moving world. The conference is an opportunity for delegates to hear from and engage with experts as well as network with colleagues and speakers. Confirmed speakers include Professor Robert Allison, Vice-Chancellor, Loughborough University and Professor Chris Day, Vice-Chancellor, Newcastle University.

The Asia-Pacific Quality Network 2020



Quality Assurance for Higher Education 4.0 in the Asia-Pacific Region

16–19 April 2020
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts & Singapore Management University,
Singapore

Sub-themes:

1. Digitalization of Quality Assurance
2. Innovations in HE Accreditation in Era of Disruptive Technologies
3. Internationalization of Quality Assurance
4. Quality Assurance of Outcome-Based Teaching and Learning
5. The Role of the Governments in Higher Education 4.0

You are invited to submit papers relating to topics from the list above, or one of your own choices by 30 Dec 2019. Please indicate the number or title of your selected topic.

2020 Student Service Centres Conference



9 – 11 June 2020
Victoria University of Wellington
New Zealand

The SSCC will be in its 14th year and remains a key conference on customer service for all stakeholders in tertiary education management. Find out more about previous SSCC's and keep updated on latest information. In conjunction with the SSCC each year, Customer Service Benchmarking Australia (CSBA) offers a benchmarking program and pre-conference workshop.

2020 Conference Update (ATEM Newsletter, 16 Nov)

- Examinations Network Conference – August in Brisbane
- Tertiary Education Management Conference – 13–17 September in Brisbane
- Admissions Conference – Perth (Month TBC)
- Heads of Student Administration Conference – TBC
- Higher Education Finance Conference – TBC



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five quick questions with Liz Hemsley

What is your job title?

Strategy and Planning Advisor

Briefly, how would you describe your role in terms of your place in your institution?

I support the strategic and operational planning processes at La Trobe University. My role supports the leaders of the university to make effective evidence-based decisions by providing relevant and timely data. Based on the strategic goals of the university and the KPIs that underpin the success of those goals, I collate, transform and report on a variety of data at regular intervals. I provide this information to assist leaders in planning for the year ahead and reflecting on outcomes from the year before. I also help coordinate the design, implementation and management of business improvement activities across the university.

From your perspective, what are the emerging areas of interest in institutional research?

- Performance-based funding
- Artificial intelligence and data science
- Online teaching and online learning

What do you believe will be the future priorities for institutional research?

I think the future priority for institutional research moving forward will be around using predictive analytics on student performance and success data to improve the outcomes of our students. By applying this level of analytics, we can better the possibility of retention and completion by identifying patterns and warning signs of student attrition. While retention continues to be one of the biggest concerns for institutions, I think it is important to address this issue in a proactive way.

Complete this statement: In my role, I can't operate effectively without ...

...the supportive team around me! Both within and outside of the department I work in, I rely heavily on a variety of people to provide me with information quickly and frequently.

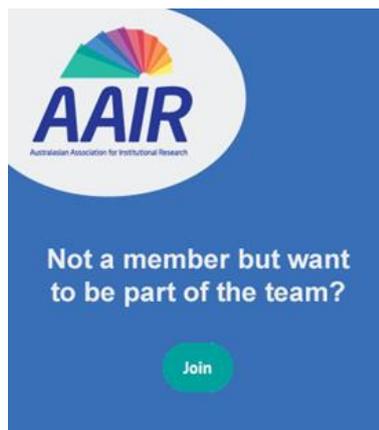


Connect Liz on [LinkedIn](#)

SOAPBOX



The Soapbox gives members the opportunity to pose a perplexing question to the entire AAIR readership (both members and non-members). This could be used for the purposes of information gathering or research. Please click the microphone below to browse current inquiries.



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Issue 2, February 2020

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? Please send your contributions to the editor@air.org.au by Wednesday 29 January 2020.

A reminder about the organisations' social media links to keep you up-to-date and in touch with all the latest news and events.



 AAIR on Twitter [@AAIRaustralia](https://twitter.com/AAIRaustralia)



[Lizzie Li](#)
Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers/authors and not necessarily those of AAIR or the institutions that make up the AAIR membership.

