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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!

I hope you managed to rest and recharge over the Christmas holiday and summer break. For me, it has been a good opportunity to focus attention away from the stresses and challenges of work, as I have taken the opportunity to spend time with family and friends, read books, and explore the areas south of where I live, while enjoying long hot sunny summer days. I know many of you may have experienced or continue to experience the effects of the La Niña weather patterns, with more storms, heavy rain and flooding, which cause additional stress that is never wanted at holiday time. However, for those of us in the lower South Island of New Zealand La Niña has bought many clear warm sunny days and very little rain. While the sun and heat have been very welcomed, the lack of rain is cause for concern with potential drought for farmers and increased risk of forest fires. These weather patterns and ever-increasing effects of climate change provide both risks and opportunities that require more planning and thinking about the future.

At the end of last year—and immediately before the 2022 AAIR Forum—the Executive Committee meet face-to-face for the first time in many years to review our strategic direction. We looked back at our past and where we were in 2022 and focused on the future to keep AAIR relevant to all our members.

Our intention was to review:

- Our mission – what are we here for?
- Our vision – where are we going?

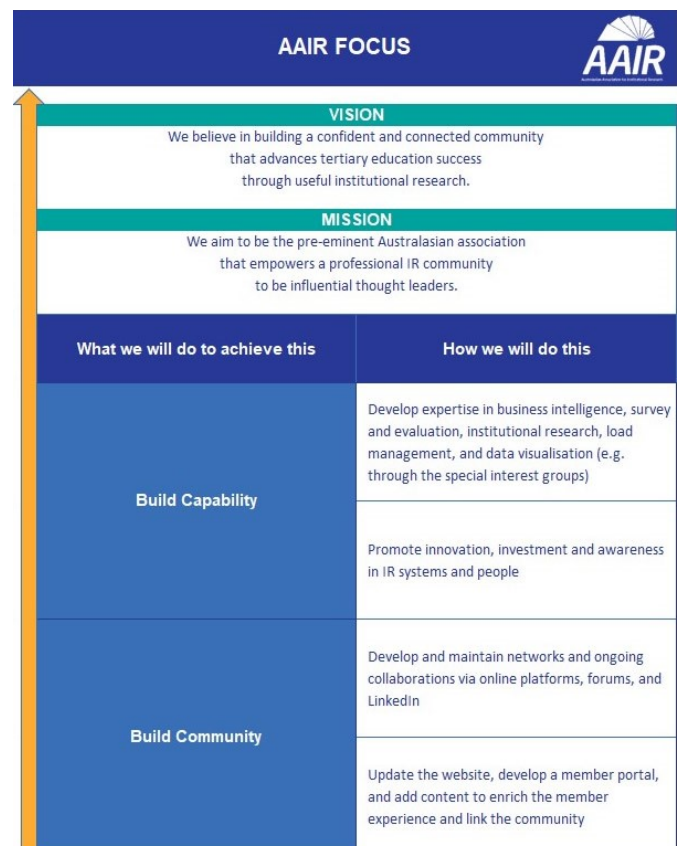
Our updated purpose and vision are:

Our Mission

We believe in building a confident and connected community that advances tertiary education and research success through useful institutional research.

Our Vision

We aim to be the pre-eminent Australasian association that empowers a professional institutional research community to be influential thought leaders.



This year our themes of focus are building our capability and building our community. These themes underpin the events and activities we are planning through 2023, ending with the Forum in late November. Keep an eye out for information in our newsletters, emails, and on our website for upcoming events that will build our community. We're here to support you to build your capability as a professional institutional researcher, and to help you become an influential thought leader in your institution and across the higher education sector.

We ended 2022 with our first hybrid Forum and our first time being face-to-face since 2019. It was wonderful to reconnect with old friends and meet so many new friends. There were thought-provoking and varied presentations from keynote speakers, and engaging and informative sessions from all our presenters. The generous sharing of knowledge and experience to a supportive group of passionate professionals is what makes the AAIR Forum so very special.

We were fortunate to have the Macquarie Graduate School of Management (MSGM) to both host and support the 2022 AAIR forum. A big thank you to Andrew Bradshaw and Chandrama Acharya who did so much work liaising with MSGM to ensure that we held a successful Forum. Don Johnston, our Vice President, again did a brilliant job coordinating and leading the Forum. Our own Executive Committee also made up the Forum organising committee. We continue to be thankful for the outstanding support from Victoria McIver and Brittany Lee from Leishman and Associates who continue to ensure our Forum runs seamlessly and is cost-effective. If you didn't get the opportunity to attend the 2022 AAIR Forum, I would encourage you to plan to be with us in Melbourne later this year.

To reflect our themes of building our capability and building our community we welcomed Ilse Hogendorf (Honorary Secretary), and Pallavi Khanna (committee member) to the Executive Committee, as well as some role changes for existing Committee members. Andrew Bradshaw has taken on the role of Newsletter Editor and Dr Lizzie Li is our new Honorary Treasurer.

Supporting our Special interest groups (SIGs) as SIG Chairs are:

- **Cassie Saunders**
Surveys and Evaluation SIG Chair
- **Jason Mazanov**
Surveys and Evaluation – Qualitative Research and Analysis SIG Lead
- **Juan Laverde Velasco and Alex Sieniarski**
Load Management and Planning Co-SIG Chairs

We ended 2022 by saying goodbye to AAIR Honorary Treasurer and life member Greg Jakob, Past President Kathie Rabel, and Honorary Secretary, Pam Rayner. They have all retired from the committee after providing considerable value and regarded service.

As you return to work mode for 2023, you might have a burning question you want answered about institutional research, or perhaps you have a story from your own institution to share. Please let us know by contacting any of our committee members (please refer to [our committee](#) on our website), or go directly to our Executive Officer, Liesha Northover, at info@aair.org.au.

Na te whakarongo me te titiro ka puta mai te korero

Through looking and listening we gain wisdom

Stuart Terry
AAIR President





For the first time in 3 years, the AAIR Forum held a hybrid event, where 71 people attended Macquarie University in person, and a further 57 attended virtually, from 30 November to 2 December. It was wonderful seeing people from so many places across Australia, plus international visitors from New Zealand and Japan. It was especially wonderful to learn that we had 62 first-time AAIR Forum attendees across both face-to-face and virtual registrations).

The AAIR Executive Committee wishes to thank our platinum partners, Explorance and Altis, and our silver partners, QILT and the Social Research Centre, for their ongoing support of the AAIR Forum. Finally, we would like to thank our venue sponsor Macquarie University along with Macquarie University staff for supporting the Forum.



For the opening day, we held our Special Interest Group (SIG) sessions on the Wednesday afternoon. It was wonderful to have Australian Government representatives attend the Load Management and Planning SIG, the Government Reporting SIG, and the Surveys and Evaluation SIG. AAIR wishes to thank the government representatives for their continued support of AAIR. We also hosted the Business Intelligence and Analytics SIG. The AAIR Executive Committee wishes to thank all AAIR SIG Chairs for their contribution, continued leadership, and presentations throughout the year. Following the SIG sessions, it was time for a social get-together for all those attending the AAIR Forum in person. This social

function was held at UBar at the university, where the Social Research Centre sponsored pizzas and drinks.

Day 2 of the AAIR Forum began with an acknowledgment and welcome to the AAIR Forum by the AAIR President, Stuart Terry. Stuart also thanked our official Day 2 partner, Explorance for their ongoing support of AAIR. Jonathan Wylie, Vice President of Strategy, Planning and Performance, then officially welcomed the attendees to Macquarie University. Jonathan then gave a brief history of Macquarie University.

The first keynote presentation was presented by Andrew Norton from Australian National University. He talked about the future direction of higher education policy affecting Australian higher education providers. Andrew explained how some policies and bills have potentially significant implications for higher education. He also provided some details on future proposals under the [Australian Universities Accord](#) the proposed dates for the review, proposed outcomes, and the introduction of those changes.

Following the keynote, we held the 2022 AAIR AGM. AAIR President, Stuart Terry, outlined the many achievements of the Association throughout 2022, especially as we emerge from COVID-19 into a position where AAIR will again be hosting 'in-person' events. At the AGM, we also had the pleasure of voting in a new life member, Greg Jakob. Well deserved Greg, especially for your role as AAIR Treasurer over the last 4 years while the country was in lockdown, for keeping AAIR viable through this difficult time, and for your service on the committee prior to that since 2015. From all of us at AAIR, good luck in your retirement from the higher education sector.



For the remainder of Day 2 and the afternoon of Day 3, the AAIR Forum had several concurrent sessions for AAIR members, with topics ranging from qualitative data analysis, analysis of first year students, new data



and analytics in higher education, and higher degree research analysis, to survey analysis during COVID-19, and surviving TCSI.

At the beginning of Day 3, we had the pleasure welcoming the keynote presenter David Miller, Chief Data Officer at Macquarie University. David presented on some of the achievements undertaken by his team in the Business Intelligence and Reporting Office, and how his team has supported the university's operating plan and senior management in their decision-making process.

We also had a very open panel discussion with Dr Leanne Holt (Macquarie University) and Ron Bull (Otago Polytechnic) on equity in higher education. Specifically, this was a discussion on Australian indigenous students and New Zealand Māori students, and how a comparison of the different government policies across these 2 countries had resulted in different but also similar outcomes.

At the conclusion of the AAIR Forum, we congratulated our winners.

Best Presenter award:

- Dr Bret Stephenson from La Trobe University for his presentation, *An analysis of 'ghost student' failure beyond the first year: exploring course, unit and year level factors*

Best New Presenter award:

- Christie Woodhouse from Australian National University for her presentation, *Qualitative Data Analysis – Part 2*

Thank you to all presenters during the AAIR forum.

Andrew Bradshaw

AAIR Executive Committee Member and Newsletter Editor



EDITORIAL

Dear newsletter readers

Welcome to 2023, and to my first edition of the AAIR newsletter. Hopefully, you will find these newsletters of interest as I aim to benefit the institutional research community by providing updates on news from the government and other relevant bodies.

I hope everyone has enjoyed a safe and relaxing break over the Christmas and New Year period. I've spent my break catching up on sport and various TV shows, all while I've been in 10 days of COVID isolation.

As you may know, at the AAIR AGM late last year we saw a few changes take place in the AAIR Executive Committee. Greg has moved on from the Treasurer's role, and Lizzie will be our new Treasurer. As a result, I have volunteered to be the new newsletter editor. I plan to publish a newsletter each month, where possible. Thanks Lizzie and Liesha for your help as I transition into this new role.

Be sure to check out the President's Update and the of the AAIR Forum in Review in this edition of the newsletter.

Andrew Bradshaw
AAIR Newsletter Editor

RENEWED FOCUS ON AAIR STRATEGY

Renewed focus to help meet evolving AAIR community needs

The AAIR Executive Committee recently met to review our strategic plan. While COVID got in the way of us running this session earlier, we realised that it presented an opportunity to renew our focus to better meet the needs of our AAIR community that has evolved as a result of the pandemic.

Being an organisation that is predominantly run by volunteers, we are committed to focussing on areas that we believe will make the most impact on our community, given that we are also members of this community and beneficiaries of those focus areas.

The strategic planning session, facilitated by Eva Seidel, was spent renewing the Association's vision and mission statements. The new statements are:

Vision: We aim to be the pre-eminent Australasian association that empowers a professional institutional research community to be influential thought leaders.

Mission: We believe in building a confident and connected community that advances tertiary education and research success through useful institutional research.

We then identified key activities that we believe will help us achieve our vision and mission. These activities represented two themes that have now become the Association's key focus areas: **Building Capability** and **Building Community**. These focus areas will become official portfolios for the Executive Committee to manage, and to build on them we will include the following activities:

Building capability:

1. Develop expertise in special interest group areas
2. Promote innovation, investment, and awareness in institutional research systems and people

Building community:

1. Develop and maintain networks and ongoing collaborations

2. Enrich online content and link the community in the virtual space

The AAIR Executive Committee took the opportunity to share this renewed focus with the community at the recent AAIR Forum in Sydney, with great input and feedback. We encourage the wider community to provide us with further feedback and/or to support these initiatives. We look forward to seeing how our renewed focus will help you get value from being a member of the AAIR community.

Share Feedback

SECTOR NEWS & VIEWS

[At Western Sydney U the vote in favour of adopting the enterprise agreement](#) jointly proposed by management and unions was 95 per cent for academics and 97 per cent for professional staff. (About a third of the electorate turned out). It's a flashing neon sign for management and union negotiators – the grownups like it when you cooperate.

[The pace is picking up in enterprise bargaining](#) – managements might want to get three-year agreements in place under the system they know. There is a bunch of detail to be determined on how the new IR system will work – including how long employers and unions have to reach new agreements under the existing rules. The government has increased the time before multi-employer bargaining can begin, from six to nine months after the expiration of the last agreement (CMM November 29). Which may mean at best, universities where agreements have expired have nine months at most from now to get a deal done with the local unions. Unless it doesn't – IR observers suggest that the Fair Work Commission will have a big role in deciding the operating details of the new system (CMM – 1 Dec).

[Management and the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union have agreed on terms for a new enterprise agreement at University of Tasmania](#). The deal is as expected a fortnight back when the union cancelled industrial action in response to bargaining progress (CMM November 18). The agreement includes a 13.5 per cent pay rise, including 4.6 per cent paid in July, through to mid 25, improved conditions, some continuing positions in place of casual jobs and a union-management



consultative committee. The union will now put the proposal to members for agreement, before it goes to an all-university staff vote. If adopted, the offer will be a much-needed win for management, allowing it to focus on the campaign against relocating the university to the Hobart CBD. And it may reduce the scope of questions at hearings of the Legislative Council's inquiry into the university's governance. The creation of the committee will also help with that, giving management witnesses a positive future to point to. (CMM 1 Dec)

[Uni Newcastle wants a new agreement wrapped-up for Christmas. Management says it is hoping for an agreement with unions and staff reps tomorrow.](#) The major change in the revised offer the university offers appears to be 9.5 per cent in pay rises, in three annual increases, with the first backdated to October. The university previously proposed a two-year agreement, citing the need to prepare for uncertain times, (CMM September 21). Management is also promoting improved benefits long in the offer, including ten 'concession days' for staff to take and extending 17 per cent super to casuals. Management and unions meet tomorrow afternoon and DVC Kent Anderson says he hopes there will be an agreement. Perhaps to set a context for any discussion of pay at the meeting, VC Alex Zelinsky warns the university community that costs are up and student revenue is down and there will be a \$23m deficit next year. While the VC announces a halt on a major capex outlay, he makes no mention of cuts, adding, 'we remain on the right trajectory, but restraint will still be required as we head into a challenging 2023,' he says. It's a message negotiator from the Community and Public Sector Union might heed. Last month their colleagues at Southern Cross U backed an offer that management pitched as suited to hard times, which the National Tertiary Education Union opposed – the offer got up in all-staff vote. (CMM – 1 Dec).

[University of Notre Dame Australia announces a 2 per cent pay-rise, backdated to October.](#) There's also a \$1000 one-off payment for junior academic and professional staff. It comes ahead of the formal start of enterprise bargaining. 'While many universities across the country are currently negotiating new enterprise agreements, not all have provided their staff with an administrative pay increase,' DVC Finance Mike Conroy tells staff. Good o – but as the nominal expiry date of the previous agreement was December 31 last perhaps

this pay rise will be backdated into management's offer for the new one. (CMM – 1 Dec)

[Skills Minister Brendan O'Connor has commissioned the Repts' Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training to inquire into, 'the perceptions and status of vocational education and training.'](#) Which is interesting, what with the inquiry being into helping VET, not the just government's TAFE fave. The ToRs are four;

- * info for students and how that funded by the Commonwealth may be improved
- * perceptions and status of VET, including international best practice
- * partnerships between VET providers and employers
- * Commonwealth programmes and 'intersections' with states/territories, industry 'and philanthropic efforts'.

Submissions are due March 1 – which should be plenty of time, what with the vast amount of relevant research already undertaken by the estimable National Centre for Vocational Education Research. (CMM – 2 Dec)

[DVC Rs will 'certify the national interest test statement' in research bids, 'confirming that the statement clearly and simply explains the benefit of the research to Australia'.](#) Programme assessors will also use the NIT statement, 'when they are considering the benefit and impact of the proposed research.' The change appears intended to address the widely-loathed ministerial veto over ARC recommended grants while maintaining a consideration of the national interest in funding research. As Education Minister Jason Clare put it, 'it is my view that the National Interest Test (in research applications) should continue, but should be clearer, simpler and easily understood,' (CMM August 31). The ARC announcement may be sufficient to calm the winds of protest that followed former acting education minister Stuart Robert's culture-warring NIT veto of six Discovery Programme applications on Christmas Eve (CMM January 25). However national interest tests will still go to the minister, 'who makes the final decision on grant funding.' Question is whether this will help the ARC with Margaret Sheil and colleagues' agency review. One of Professor Sheil's instructions from the government is to consider how the council can 'maintain the trust of the research sector,' (CMM August 31). As Universities Australia put it late yesterday, 'we look forward to further information of the exact nature of the

revised National Interest Test and thank the government and the Australian Research Council for backing our researchers and the vital work they undertake on behalf of the nation.' (CMM – 2 Dec)

[The Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties recommends Australia ratify the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications.](#) Reasons why include:

- * 'for Australian qualifications to be recognised and accepted worldwide would add to the value of an Australian qualification'
- * 'a framework for the recognition of qualifications gained both through traditional and non-traditional learning modes'
- * Australia maintains 'full autonomy' and its recognition system already complies with the convention.

'The committee notes the role Australia played in chairing the drafting committee and in achieving unanimous agreement for the Global Convention's adoption in November 2019.' (CMM – 2 Dec)

[Education Minister Jason Clare introduced the bill for a major new programme into parliament 1 December 2022](#) It's Australia's Economic Accelerator which, the explanatory memorandum advises, will 'create a clear and structured career pathway in innovation and commercialisation focused research and drive reform of the existing funding and reward structures in Australian universities.' 'What, like the previous government's Economic Accelerator?, you ask. That's the one (CMM February 3). In position Labor signalled broad support for the Accelerator and it delivered in the budget, with \$4,20m across the forward estimates. The programme will support researchers from bench stage, including PhD students. Those that make it through assessments will be funded through to market-ready, in large part via CSIRO's Main Sequence Ventures. Researchers will be supported by 'priority managers', commercial-focused experts in the seven broad industries that are priorities for the government's National Reconstruction Fund, (resources, agriculture, transport, medical science, renewables/low emission, defence capabilities, developing robotics, AI, quantum tech). The priority managers will report to an advisory board which will advise the minister on the programme and develop a five-year research commercialisation strategy. The eight-member board will 'represent government, industry and research sectors.' Prior to the election



there was talk that CSIRO would have a hand in managing the priority managers and supporting the AEA board – although there was disquiet about the influence that would allow the agency (CMM April 1). Now observers suggest some of this work will go to research consultancies. Whatever the government's intent, an announcement is expected in the next week or so. The government talks up the importance of discovery research, in August Mr Clare asked the Australia Research Council for mechanisms to identify, 'the highest quality university research in Australia, particularly basic research, beyond the current functions of grants reporting' (CMM August 31). However, with the AEA it is picking up the applied research pace. 'It will fill a gap in the current research commercialisation landscape by funding translational research from early-stage research into a product that shows viability for industry partnership and investment,' Mr Clare said in the House yesterday (CMM – 2 Dec).

[A meeting of University of New England staff and graduates Friday called on Chancellor James Harris to resign and for the university's Council to appoint a successor, 'through an open and consultative process, including with strong staff representation'](#). What happened: The proposal was adopted by a meeting of the university's Convocation, (CMM November 30) attended by just shy of 500 people eligible to vote. It was called by Interim VC Simon Evans, after months of controversy over Mr Harris' support for former vice chancellor Brigid Heywood's Future Fit restructure plan and a belief among UNE staff that Council was slow to distance the university from Professor Heywood following police charging her with assault. Professor Heywood has pleaded innocent and will face court in the new year (CMM 5 Dec).

[A sign of pay rise to come at ANU](#). Staff covered by the university's industrial agreement will receive a 3.5 per cent pay rise as of February while enterprise bargaining continues. 'I know that everyone has been feeling the increased pressures by the rise in the cost of living and I hope this increase will alleviate some of the stress being felt,' VC Brian Schmidt tells them. The campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union was quick to claim it as a win, pointing out it had been calling for months for a pay lift. The union had wanted 5 per cent, perhaps as the first of three equal increases under the new agreement. That management has awarded 3.5 per cent

may indicate what it will offer for the next two annual increases. (CMM – 5 Dec)

[Greens senator Mehreen Faruqi wants to end indexation of student loan debt and tie the repayment threshold to the median wage](#). The Senate has sent her bill to the Education and Employment Legislation Committee. It will report in April, with hearings to be set and submissions due February 23. Government witnesses who graduated pre-HECs, will undoubtedly choose their words carefully if they have to explain why the bill should fail.

[Professor McCulloch wants the Sheil Review of the Australian Research Council to recommend a small grants programme, 'of the sort that would support researchers in disciplines and on topics requiring time but little in the way of large-scale equipment, as is common in the arts, humanities and some of the social sciences.'](#) He points to US and UK programmes as precedents and suggests such funding would be a boon for ECRs and for researchers laying groundwork for a Discovery bid. To encourage Professor Sheil and her colleagues he urges those interested to respond to the review's open-ended 'any suggestions?' Question Ten. 'Imagine if 100 responses suggesting something like this were received,' he writes. 'It would have to be included in the report emanating from the review and the idea of a small-grants scheme would have to be considered.' No harm in asking people to ask. (CMM – 6 Dec)

[After 15 months of bargaining there's no deal at Uni of Newcastle](#). Management will put a pay offer to staff – the NTEU says vote no. After talks failed Friday university management will put its final offer to a staff vote next week. The offer includes 9.5 per cent in pay rises over three year, ten 'concession' days off and extending 17 per cent super to casuals. 'As the vast majority of our staff are not union members, we have made the significant decision to proceed to a staff vote on our new agreements without the endorsement of the unions,' DVC Kent Anderson told staff yesterday. 'Given the impasse, we think you should decide what is right for our university.' However, the National Tertiary Education Union states, 'university management offered a sub-standard pay offer that nobody at the bargaining table, except themselves, would accept. They are also proposing to reduce important conditions on a number of fronts, in both professional and academic agreements.' The other campus union, the Community and Public Sector U could not be reached yesterday but is

believed to be not making any recommendation to members. Uni Newcastle follows Griffith U, where management announced last week that it would put an offer to staff without NTEU support. (CMM – 6 Dec)

[The 2020 Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia survey reports 9.5 per cent women unenrolled or withdrew from a course in Victoria, just ahead of NSW. 8.8 per cent left in the other states and territories](#). The figures for males were marginally better, 8.2 per cent in NSW, 4.9 per cent in Vic and 5.5 per cent in the rest of the country. More students in Victoria and NSW than the rest of the country also thought interruptions to study would delay course completion. (CMM – 6 Dec)

[VET FEE HELP too disgraceful to forget](#). Victims of the spivs whose greed led to the VET FEE HELP outrage are nearly out of time to apply to have their students' debts credited. Skills Minister Brendan O'Connor is on to it. The existing legislative instrument that covers people misled into signing up for courses they did not need expires at year end but the explanatory statement for a new one makes the case for 12 months more. Thanks to the learned Andrew Norton for pointing this out. While 163 000 students have had the debts cancelled (technically their HELP debts are re-credited), the Commonwealth Actuary advises there is potentially still some to go. Which makes the extension excellent. What isn't is that the \$2.2bn VET FEE HELP affront to the public purse is now largely forgotten. The Australian National Audit Office explained what occurred (CMM December 21 2016) but how VET FEE HELP occurred, under Labor and coalition governments, has never been properly presented to the public. (CMM – 7 Dec)

[From next year all UNSW HDR research students' scholarships will be \\$35 000, 15 per cent above the Commonwealth funded rate](#). And in '24 the university will hike HDR schols again, to \$37 680, which it expects to be one of the highest, 'if not the highest' in the country. The new rate means that after paying annual rent on a two-bedroom flat near UNSW a postgrad would still have \$4000 left from their scholarship. But there is nothing the university can do about eastern Sydney property prices and as DVC R Nicholas Fisk puts it, 'with 2 per cent of Australians now holding a PhD, impoverishing stipend rates can no longer be ignored.'



[In a speech marking the imminent centenary of the Smith Family, Education Minister Jason Clare praises the charity, as 'an organisation that has always understood that education is the most powerful cause for good.](#) That it is the real change agent in our society.' Jason Clare stands on the education high ground. Clare went on to cite his three-policy plan to change the present situation where, 'children from poor families are less likely to go to preschool, less likely to finish high school and less likely to go to university than children from wealthier families.' on the Universities Accord: 'It will look at everything from quality and standards to international education and research. But what I really want them to zero in on is equity.' the National School Reform Agreement: 'young people from poor backgrounds are less likely to finish high school. We need to fix this.' and on a Productivity Commission review: to 'advise on how to build a universal early education system that gives every Australian child the opportunity that they deserve.'

[In August a vaccine plant at the university was announced – construction started yesterday.](#) The state government and feds are helping fund the plant, being built at Monash U – Clayton (CMM August 16). Plan is for it to pump out 100m Moderna vaccine doses a year. It's scheduled to open in 2024. (CMM – 8 Dec)

[Uni Adelaide and Uni SA have agreed to a six-month process to hammer out terms for a possible merger in 2026.](#) what's happened: The proposal involves the parties working with state and federal governments on a funding model but the two universities already agree there can be no net job losses. Talks have been underway for months with the two managements amenable to an arrangement but some members of the councils said to be uncomfortable. Last month a Uni Adelaide representative told CMM, 'discussions to consider policy implications and how we might achieve the best outcomes for staff, students and the South Australian community have been held. A formal University of Adelaide position in respect of such matters will be made by our council in due course.' (CMM November 22). The announcement is a win for SA premier Peter Malinauskas, who has long argued a university merger is needed to give SA critical mass in education. There is funding in the present state budget for a commission to consider a merger but the government's preference is for the universities to get the job done

themselves. It is also an achievement for the two vice chancellors Peter Høj (Uni Adelaide) and David Lloyd (Uni SA) who are said to have cooperated to ensure that the proposal did not go the way of failed discussions in 2018. what's agreed: Both unis are adamant that no deal is done but there are agreed governance fundamentals, without which merger talks would stop before they start, including;

- * a merged institution would be called Adelaide University;
- * co VCs until appointment of a vice chancellor for the combined university
- * legislation for the new university based on the Uni SA Act
- * a transition council with equal membership until Adelaide U starts. Uni SA, 'in consultation with Uni Adelaide' will nominate the chancellor of the transition council. (CMM – 8 Dec)

[The government wants to increase HE participation by disadvantaged students – a new report finds reaching regional, rural and remote school students is harder than recruiters might think.](#) Mollie Dollinger (Deakin U) and colleagues set out issues and propose answers in a research report for the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education. There's a bunch of information on the how and why of talking to RRR students – and some surprising findings on what they don't get to hear, including, 'the value of higher education could be better communicated, including links to specific jobs, jobs of the future, lifetime earnings, as well as notions of civic development and "education for education's sake". Participants also stressed that the delivery of information could also be improved. One principal noted, "I haven't ever seen a university website that is user-friendly" and, 'a lack of information or exposure for students on what university was like, clarity on how students could apply and enrol, and what courses were available, as well as how these courses linked to potential RRR jobs (CMM – 8 Dec)

[QUT management upped its offer and the union agreed.](#) The wage increase through to 2025 will be 14.1 per cent, up two per cent on management's previous offer and close to the market-setting UWS agreement (CMM July 26). The balance of the first rise, not already paid under an administrative arrangement, will go to staff on their approving the agreement – nice touch, given Fair Work Commission ratification, which is required for an agreement law, can take months. There are also 19 more continuing positions for

current academic sessional staff who want to convert, bringing the total to 118 over three years. 'We have worked very constructively over the last couple of weeks to come up with a package that provides relief for immediate cost of living pressures, balanced with long-term stability,' David Nielsen, president of the QUT branch of the National Tertiary Education Union says. (CMM – 8 Dec)

[Uni SA and Uni Adelaide are adamant that the proposed merger is not a done-deal, they have six months to make it so.](#) Jason Clare is optimistic. The federal education minister announces the Commonwealth will cooperate with the two institutions and the state government 'to create a new university for SA.' Mr Clare is careful to refer to the 'proposed Adelaide University' but adds 'this plan will draw on the existing strengths' of the two to be merged. (CMM – 9 Dec)

[Griffith University has added new content to the 2017 enterprise agreement clause on intellectual and academic freedom for the replacement it proposes.](#) In the past agreement intellectual and academic freedoms were codified and qualified, with the words 'these rights are linked to the responsibilities of staff to support the role of universities as places of independent learning and thought ... 'However, additions to the draft agreement are 'reasonable and proportionate' 'prohibitions, restrictions or conditions'. A university representative tells CMM that this is to, 'to ensure alignment' with the recommendations in the Robert French model code of academic freedom and freedom of speech and the Commonwealth's Higher Education Threshold Standards and that the proposed agreement is 'underpinned' by Griffith U's policy on both. (CMM – 9 Dec)

[U Tas management will be braced for more of a walloping as the Legislative Council committee inquiry into uni governance continues today and tomorrow.](#) It follows years of criticism of the university's building programme in Hobart's CBD. So praise for development at the Inveresk Campus (in Launceston) might make a change. A major building is set to open in April and there was a preview last week, with federal and state ministers agreeing that it was all good-o. Launceston Mayor Danny Gibson was particularly pleased, 'the ultimate relocation of the campus to Inveresk will provide an opportunity for Launceston to become a true university city.' (CMM – 12 Dec)



[The Commonwealth funded MicroCred Seeker was built and will be run by the NSW Universities Admission Centre.](#)

There are MCs from just ten universities and five private providers, but a bunch more of institutions are listed, suggesting content from them is imminent. However, the big corporates who provide training to all comers aren't in sight – Google for example, which offers courses via Coursera. Perhaps they don't fit a definition of MC or are in the queue. TEQSA-registered providers are getting first go, with others, 'able to be onboarded in future phases.' As it was Friday, CQU leads with 60 courses, mainly health and business. 'Key principles and concepts in accounting' is a steal – ten hours of study for \$90 makes it cheaper than a basic textbook. The site itself is plain vanilla – no-one is going to accuse UAC of spending up on creative, perhaps it assumes that people who come to the site are already sold on MCs. But while UAC advises there will be 'a national campaign across social media and search to promote the platform,' It's not going to replace individual institutions running their own campaigns – as Uni Melbourne does for its micro-certificates on Twitter. (CMM – 12 Dec)

[Griffith University joins universities topping up Commonwealth HDR scholarships for next year.](#)

The government pays \$29 800 which the university will increase to just under \$32 200. It was the second university to kick the tin for postgrads last week, following UNSW, which upped pay to \$35 000. U Tas has also increased schols to \$31 500, Monash U will, to \$33 000, in January and ANU started paying \$34 000 in October. (CMM – 12 Dec)

[The Werribee-based facility at Uni of Melbourne, is set to shut as part of the breakup of the Faculty of Vet and Ag Sciences, the constituent schools of which are moving into science.](#)

When, or formally if, until process is complete, the hospital goes, vet students will move to 'a distributed model for clinical teaching,' (prac training in vet practices). Uni Melbourne has been looking to cut costs at the vet hospital for a while, savings there as part of the university's Pandemic Reset Programme, attracted ire 18 months ago (CMM February 22 2021). When the present proposal was announced last month Uni Melbourne said it was looking for a commercial vet business to take over the hospital, (CMM November 9). But the possibility of closure did not go down well with staff, or community members – it made Nine TV

news, with a reporter asking, 'how will it affect the wider community, including anyone who loves pets' (CMM November 23). (CMM – 13 Dec)

[OUT joins universities topping up Commonwealth HDR student to \\$32 500 in the new year \(CMM Friday\) with surely others to come.](#)

The feds pay \$29 800. Question is how many universities will not follow and leave HDRs on less than a less than basic wage. (CMM 13 Dec)

[Deakin university is world number one for sports sciences – again.](#)

Deakin U came first in the Academic Ranking of World Universities in 2016 and proving it wasn't a fluke, in 2017 as well. It dropped back to third in the ARWU for 2018 and 2020 but returned to first place, last year and this (for reasons that CMM can't remember there was no 2019 ranking). Back in 2016 a learned reader suggested that DU's win was then the first ever Australian number one in a major discipline ranking – having managed it four times must be even more of a record. DU does not have all the glory in this year's ARWU – Victoria U is seventh and Curtin U is tenth. All up there are 13 Australian universities in the world top 50. (CMM – 13 Dec)

[Uni New England Chancellor James Harris tells staff that council has 'endorsed in principle' a standing committee of convocation and work is underway.](#)

This was one of three proposals adopted by what was either a unique, or at least very rare meeting of convocation (mainly graduates and academic staff) convened by Interim VC Simon Evans. Whatever Professor Evans' intent, the opportunity gave members an opportunity to raise concerns with Mr Harris leadership and long-standing disquiet at the state of the university (CMM December 5). A second proposal was for council and senior management to 'strengthen accountability' to the university community. And the five-part third, included an ombudsman and appointment of a new chancellor. (CMM 13 Dec)

[A second union is 'agin it – the vote is on this week at Uni of Newcastle.](#)

The Community and Public Sector Union is calling on staff to vote against the agreement. NSW assistant state secretary Troy Wright emailed members first thing yesterday, urging them to reject the offer, which includes a 9.5 per cent pay rise across the agreement. 'Fifteen months ago when bargaining commenced, salaries ranked as one of the concerns of lower importance for our members. But bargaining has taken place

simultaneously with one of the worst periods of inflation our country has experienced,' he states. (CMM – 14 Dec)

[The Council of Australian University Librarians has reached an open access agreement with Sage.](#)

It follows terms being set with the other giants of scholarly publishing, John Wiley, Springer-Nature, Taylor & Francis and Elsevier. And it is in addition to agreements with 20 or so other publishers (by the start of '23) – including this week, with the International Water Association's publishing arm. While there are publisher-specific variations on cost and journals included in each, the overall CAUL objective is for research published by academics at member universities to be immediately open access on publication, with publishing charges absorbed in an all-journal subscription price with each publisher. (CMM 14 Dec)

Professional staff voting supported the university's proposal for an enterprise agreement for them. Academics didn't. Some two thirds of professional staff voting backed management's offer on wages and conditions, but academics rejected the offer to them by a similar margin – the two groups have separate enterprise agreements. The campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union campaigned hard against both proposals, arguing in particular there was a lack of detail on academic workloads and how to set them, including for casual staff, and opposing variations to the free speech protections in the 2017 agreement (CMM December 9). In a message to staff yesterday VC Carolyn Evans said the university would take professional staff approval to the Fair Work Commission for ratification of their agreement. (CMM – 14 Dec)

[New Murdoch Uni VC Andrew Deeks sets out how he wants the university to work.](#)

Murdoch U will expand 'effective' FT students by a third, to 15 000 by 2030, 40 per cent of them Internationals. The target is set in a strategy, released yesterday by new VC Andrew Deeks, with three goals, * a leading university in education, teaching and translational research for sustainability * a 'welcoming, diverse and inclusive community' and * 'the university of choice for First Nations peoples.' A core objective also appears to be securing staff support and stability after years of change and controversy. (CMM – 14 Dec)

[Management and unions 'have largely reached in-principle agreement on most provisions in the draft agreement' Provost](#)



[Vicki Chen told staff last night](#). Terms include improvements in staff conditions, notably the creation of 110 continuing positions for academic casuals under a new enterprise agreement. The university also offers three headline pay rises totalling 11 per cent over '23-25. However, UTS observers suggest that when administrative pay rises already awarded are included the total increase over the notional period of the new agreement is over 14 per cent. (CMM – 16 Dec)

[The state government has a media campaign encouraging homeowners to host international students](#). 'Providing safe and affordable housing for international students is essential to the growth of the sector,' the government states. Presumably the government had thought of the need for beds when they decided to give education agents \$10m to promote the state (CMM September 16). (CMM – 16 Dec)

International News

[It was one of former universities minister David Willetts' greatest regrets: that the 2012 fee regime in England had a huge negative impact on the number of students studying undergraduate courses part time](#). The traditional image of first degree study is three years away from home, but students, courses, and indeed lives come in many shapes and sizes. Part-time study is a necessity for many – a way to manage family and work responsibilities while keeping hold of your dreams. A decade on, and despite regrets expressed by nearly everyone involved, the deleterious effect on part-time study has not really been addressed. Numbers are still low, even if the decline has been arrested somewhat. (Wonkhe – 5 Dec)

Ranking and Rating

[The new issue of UNSW's Aggregate Ranking of Top Universities includes GDP and research development national expenditures, 'to determine country level performance and return on investment.'](#)

On this basis, the new ARTU reports, Switzerland has the most top 200 universities per capita but Australia and Hong Kong 'come out on top' when rankings are adjusted for GDP and R&D. Australia is third in the world for universities in the top 100. Overall, there are 12 Australian universities in the global top 200, equal fourth with China, behind the US (53), UK (26) and (13). no surprises at the top end: The Group of Eight leads the locals. Uni Melbourne is 27th in the world, followed by Uni Queensland (42), Uni Sydney (46), ANU (49), Monash U (50), UNSW (53), UWA

(85) and Uni Adelaide (90). This is a big move for Uni Adelaide, up from 102 last year. (CMM – 12 Dec). Aus universities in the global second 100 are, UTS (145) Macquarie U (170), Curtin U (190) and Uni Wollongong (195). (CMM – 12 Dec)

LEARNING & TEACHING



[WSU announces its Graduate Certificate in Researcher Engagement wins a top teaching excellence award](#). Delay not your heaps of huzzahs. Because the course is for the chop. WSU advises the GCRE will be taught-out in '23, with the university moving to a micro credential in researcher development and training for all HDR candidates in '24. This, the university advises, is 'consistent with sector-wide best practice.' 'It's never wise to attract attention by winning awards' a learned reader observes. 'Innovation is all well and good but somebody will always complain that it is not core teaching.' (CMM – 16 Dec)

REPORTS & RESOURCES

[A new report from NCVET examined how the delivery of VET has changed through the COVID-19 pandemic using data from NCVET's Total VET Activity collection](#). Results show that VET subjects delivered through blended delivery (i.e., online in combination with another delivery mode) has experienced sustained growth, from almost 23% of subject enrolments in 2019 to just over 29% in 2021. VET subjects delivered online only increased by more than 3% in the year the COVID-19 pandemic was declared. This has since remained relatively steady, with a similar proportion of subjects delivered online only in 2021. The proportion of VET subjects with no online delivery has decreased since 2019. This decline was most pronounced in the first year of the pandemic with a decrease of almost 7%, followed by a smaller decrease of just under 3% between 2020 and 2021.

[Year 12 students around Australia are starting to receive their exam results](#). Victorian students got their marks yesterday. New South Wales get theirs on

Thursday, and South Australia and Western Australia have to stick it out until next week. This is a time of great expectations and intense pressure for many young people. For some, their results will be a cause for celebration. Others will be dealing with disappointment and perhaps concern if they didn't receive what they were hoping for. (The Conversation 13 Dec)

[Adding value to Australia's approach to VET teaching and assessment](#). The latest research from the National Centre for Vocational Education (NCVER) reveals that a broader conception of what it means to be competent can add value to Australia's approach to VET teaching and assessment. For the last 30 years, competency-based training (CBT) has been the main training approach used by the Australian VET sector for all types and levels of vocational qualifications. (NCVER 13 Dec)

[The latest NCVET research compared Australia's approach to competency-based training with those of other developed countries and identified its benefits and drawbacks](#). Findings show that non-technical skills and interpersonal attributes such as critical thinking, innovation, self-direction, ethics, and integrity – which are included in other countries' approach to CBT – are often not covered, explicitly taught, assessed, and recognised in Australia. The emphasis on technical skills strictly narrows the definition of what it means to be competent in the workplace. While it enables clear and consistent specification of what a VET student needs to learn to be deemed competent, there are industries and sectors where personal capabilities are critical. These include healthcare and early childhood education which are facing skills shortages. The research also highlighted that it may be time to move on from applying a single training approach for all types of vocational qualifications to a differentiated training and assessment paradigm. In addition, further consideration could be given to the use of graded or proficiency-based assessment. However, shifting to this would need further debate to ensure that it does not become burdensome for VET teachers and students, and thus make an already complex VET system more complicated. (NCVER 13 Dec)

[The latest NCVET report shows that in 2022, 65.0% of VET qualification completers had an improved employment status after completing their training, up by 4.4 percentage points from 2021](#).

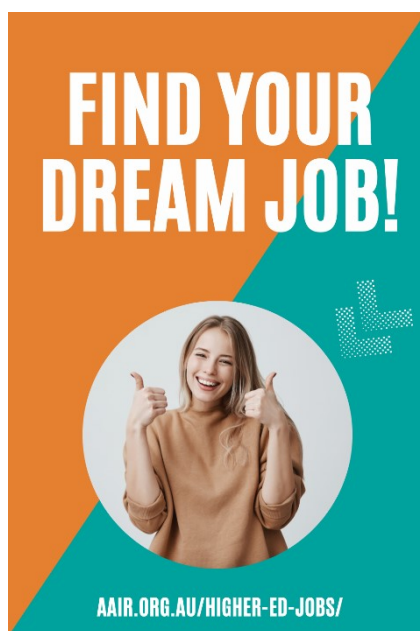


Among the qualification completers who were not employed before training, 49.6% got a job after their training (up 6.3 percentage points from 2021). For qualification completers employed before training, 17.3% were employed at a higher skill level (up by 0.8 percentage points from 2021) and 37.1% were in a better job (down 1.7 percentage points from 2021) after training. 'To get a job' and 'gain extra skills for my current job' were the main reasons cited by qualification completers for undertaking VET training, with 87.2% reporting that they have achieved their main reason for training. (NCVER 15 Dec)

[The latest VET student outcomes report from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research \(NCVER\) shows the employment outcomes for students who complete vocational education and training \(VET\) qualifications have improved.](#) This year, over 216 000 students who undertook training in qualifications, short courses, and individual subjects in 2021 completed Australia's largest survey of VET students. Results from the survey, which was run in mid-2022, show 65.0% of students who completed a VET qualification had an improved employment outcome after training, up by 4.4 percentage points compared with 2021. Outcomes were particularly good for those completing VET qualifications in the fields of Natural and physical sciences and Information technology, with proportions with an improved employment status after training up 10.2 and 6.9 percentage points respectively from 2021. (NCVER 15 Dec)

[The latest NCVER report shows that a total 415,240 apprentices and trainees were in-training as at 30 June 2022, an increase of 21.6% from 30 June 2021.](#) Non-trade occupations contributed most to the increase in in-training numbers, up by 38.3% or 47,995 when compared with the same time in 2021. Clerical and Administrative Workers and Community and Personal Service Workers had the highest absolute increases in in-training for non-trade occupations. There was a total of 241,860 apprentices and trainees in-training in trade occupations, an increase of 11.8% when compared with the same time in 2021. By industry, the largest absolute increases in in-training numbers were in the Construction, Accommodation, and Health care and social assistance sectors. (NCVER 20 Dec)

POSITIONS VACANT



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PODCASTS

[THE Campus: what makes a good higher education leader?](#) Universities have been around for a millennium, however their modern iteration - and the people who lead them - are somewhat different to their medieval European ancestors. Over the centuries, institutions have dealt with a multitude of difficulties but the current combination of a global pandemic, economic downturn, populist politics and a climate crisis seems particularly challenging. So what sort of leader does the moment call for? And how are senior figures in higher education responding to the issues of the day?

Leadership expert Jon McNaughton, an associate professor and associate department chair in Texas Tech University's College of Education, joins the podcast to explain how the job of university president has changed over the decades, what type of leadership is required right now and how to know when to step away. Joy Johnson, president and vice-chancellor at Simon Fraser University, shares what it's like being a rare female leader and how she approaches housing shortages and the

politics around recruiting international students.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

[Data Science Melbourne](#)

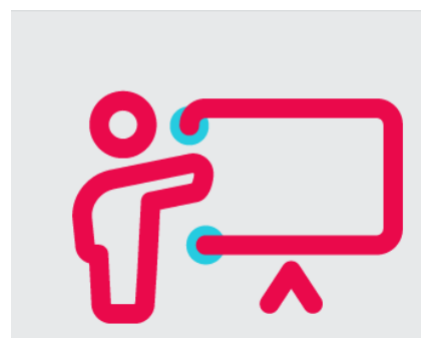
This is a group for anyone interested in 'Data Science'. We are not quite sure what the exact definition of a Data Scientist is, but if you deal with something generally related to converting data into useful insight then you will hopefully benefit from joining the group. Please follow the link to join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

[ATEM programs](#)

The Association for Tertiary Education Management provides high quality professional development and leadership programs for the tertiary education sector in Australia and New Zealand. Professional development events can be found by [Browse the ATEM PD programs calendar](#) or [Search programs and events by region](#).



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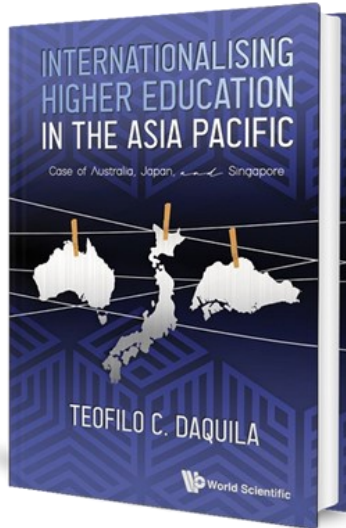
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GOOD READS

[Internationalising Higher Education in the Asia Pacific: Case of Australia, Japan, and Singapore](#)

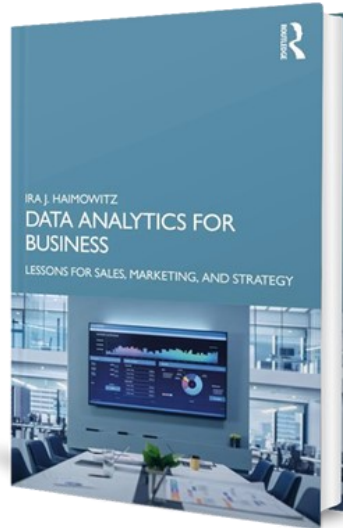
Teofilo C Daquila



With his many years of overseas experiences as an international student, educator and scholar, Teofilo C Daquila has conducted his research on the internationalisation of higher education (IHE), as it has become an important policy issue and research topic for governments and universities around the world. He aims to determine the extent of internationalisation of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region particularly in Australia, Singapore and Japan in terms of its determinants and impacts using a multi- and inter-disciplinary framework of analysis, through historical, political, geographical, economic, social, and cultural dimensions.

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[Data Analytics or Business: Lessons for Sales, Marketing and Strategy](#)

Ira J Haimowitz

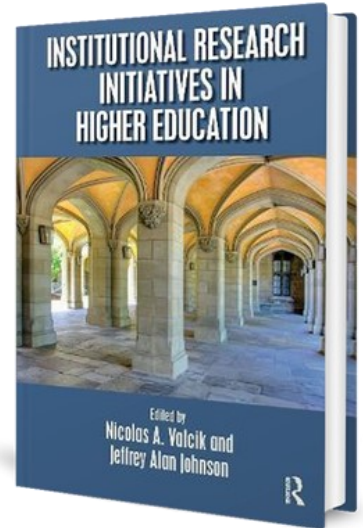


Essay-based format weaves together technical details and case studies to cut through complexity.

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[Institutional Research Initiatives in Higher Education](#)

Nicolas V. Valcik

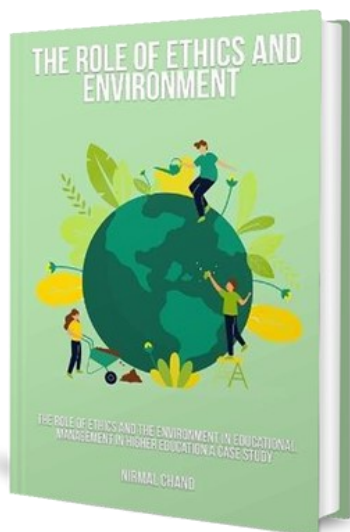


American higher education faces a challenging environment. Decreasing state appropriations, rising costs, and tightening budgets have left American colleges and universities scrambling to achieve their missions with ever more limited resources. Campus leaders have therefore increasingly relied upon institutional research and strategic planning departments to make transparent and rational decisions and to promote good stewardship of critical but finite resources. Institutional Research Initiatives in Higher Education illustrates the wealth of institutional research activities occurring in American higher education.

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[The Role of Ethics and the Environment in Educational Management in Higher Education A Case Study](#)

Nirmal Chand

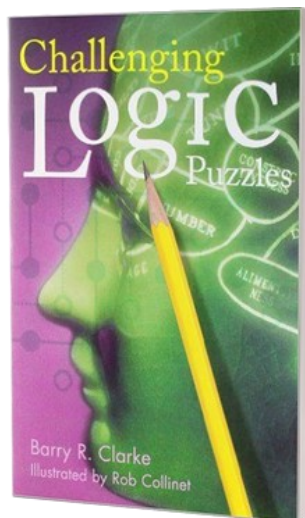


This chapter deals with the conceptual and theoretical aspects of the study covering education in general, with special reference to higher education in India, historical and philosophical aspects of ethics its dynamics and transformation to contemporary times and how it becomes vital in contributing to higher education and its management. In this process management and its methods were also reviewed very concisely. A brief review of education and its general principles and views of various authors are attempted. A history of philosophy and ethics up to contemporary time's visd-vis ethical schools and philosophers is presented very briefly.

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[Challenging Logic Puzzles](#)

Barry R Clarke



How strong are your logical-thinking skills? Find out now, with these stimulating puzzles!

So, you think you've got the brain-power to tackle tough logic puzzles? Well, try this extraordinary assortment of challenges, including Mix-and-Match logic puzzles and "Find the Liar" type puzzles. Some puzzles have tables that can be used to deduce relationships between people or items, some use word-play to present the problem, and still others use illustrations to highlight the challenge. Whatever their form, each is designed to stretch your mind to the max. And the level of difficulty increases as you move through the book, concluding with a series so diabolical, even the most expert puzzle sleuths may have to beg for mercy! Fortunately, solutions for every puzzle are included, along with explanations of how the answers are determined, so you'll even be able to build your puzzle-solving skills.

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ON THE MOVE

Melanie Bish becomes PVC Regional at La Trobe U. She moves from deputy dean of its rural health school.

Uni Sydney announces appointments to two new research management roles. Simon Ringer becomes PVC Research Infrastructure, moving from director of the university's core research facilities. Louise Sharpe becomes PVC Research Training. She is now director of graduate research at the university.

Iain Mackenzie (Griffith U) becomes chair of Natural Hazards Research Australia, the successor to the former Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC. He succeeds Katherine Woodthorpe.

Tara Murphy becomes head of the physics school at Uni Sydney.

Peter Dawkins (yes, the ex VC of Victoria U) is named Interim Director of Jobs and Skills Australia.

Lisa Line becomes Victoria U's DVC, Enterprise and Digital. She is a former DVC for voced at Swinburne and present chair of the Victorian Skills Authority Advisory Board.

Gayle Tierney continues as Victorian minister higher education and training and skills in the re-elected Andrews Government.

Jane Hansen becomes chancellor of Uni Melbourne on Jan 1. She is now deputy chancellor.

Laura Parry will be PVC Research Excellence at Uni Adelaide from January. She has been Interim PVC R this year.

Ken Wyatt, indigenous affairs minister in the previous Commonwealth Government, becomes chair of the UWA Public Policy Institute's International Advisory Board.



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five quick questions with Andrew Bradshaw



What is your job title?

In August 2022, I retired after 35 years, working initially at the University of Sydney for 2 years, before moving to Macquarie University in 1989, where I remained until retirement. Over the 35 years, I worked most of the time as the lead for government reporting for students.

Briefly, how would you describe your role in your institution?

In 1987, during my time at the University of Sydney, I would assist in the preparation of our student statistical reporting via the completion of hardcopy spreadsheets. For many of us, 1989 was a major development in government reporting, with the introduction of student load and HECS. In those days, we would send files to the Government Department on floppy disks, until the data became so big, which is when we upgraded to sending magnetic tapes via couriers. Finally, we began sending our student data via encrypted files using the Department's file servers. As I departed Macquarie University in 2022, the University had begun submitting real-time data to the Department using TCSI (Tertiary Collection of Student Information).

From your perspective, what is your expertise in institutional research?

Over the time I worked at both universities, I had many wonderful people who passed on their knowledge willingly, and I hoped that I in turn was able to pass on such knowledge to the many people I worked with over the years. It was also a privilege to form a wonderful working relationship with many colleagues in the Department. Over the years, many of these Department officials became good friends, mainly through our get-togethers at AAIR Forums and SIG Forums.

Therefore, when I was asked in my later years for advice, suggestions, or expertise on institutional research, I drew upon the many years of working in the sector, plus the shared knowledge I picked up from others while attending the many AAIR Forums over the years.

What do you believe will be the future priorities or the emerging areas for institutional research, in particular, since COVID-19?

Hopefully, COVID-19 will be part of our history and will not be a major concern in the future. If it has not already commenced, I see artificial intelligence or predictive analysis becoming commonplace across all forms of student data, from the time a student commences pre-school until the time a student completes their higher education. At the moment, we are only scratching the surface of what can be achieved. With TCSI, there is lots of data that can be analysed.

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

... the many colleagues who have passed on their knowledge to me, and the intellectual knowledge gained by working in higher education over many years.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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@aaair.org.au.

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[Andrew Bradshaw](#)

Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

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