



AAIR Newsletter March 2023



Photo by Andrew Bradshaw – Bhaktapur medieval city in Kathmandu Valley

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Currently, there is increasing debate on gender and identities that has erupted, often violently. The most recent cases we saw take place when a British activist visited Melbourne, Hobart, and Auckland this month. I find this often frenzied and confrontational debate disturbing and challenging to my own worldview, and this forces me to really think about how these polar extreme views are impacting that constant conversation I have with myself, 'who am I?'

In an academic sense, this attempt at sensemaking is what British sociologist, Anthony Giddens, refers to as applying social reflexivity. He talks about social reflexivity as a concept we as individuals use to examine how societal transformations influence our own self-view in a new context. So in effect, we are being shaped by not only what we see and hear about us in our immediate space, but also in the wider world.

I am currently slogging my way through a Doctorate in Professional Practice, and a key development from my learning is to be more reflexive in my thinking. What does this mean for me and how do I apply it? I try to zoom out and consider how my presence and perspective have been changed by my own experience and observations, and then consider, 'what does that mean for my professional practice?' As part of this approach, I am trying to consciously pause and slow down, take a step back, and consider my thoughts, feelings, and actions, while also continuing to be aware of the perspective of others. That is not always easy, in fact, it can at times be quite hard as it does require some deep reflection.

Perhaps like me, you struggle to engage in this form of 'slow thinking' and not rush as the avalanche of work floods into your email inbox, or the constant requests you get. How many of us receive a message, 'I know you are busy, but could you find time to do this task ...' I know for me this has been a trigger, as I have felt my blood pressure rise as I contemplate how am I going to add even more work into my very full workload, especially as saying, 'no' is not an option! However, by applying my slow thinking principle to think reflexively, I can manage and ideally reduce my workload. By slowing down I am more conscious of my feelings and emotions without being overwhelmed by them and ending up in that continuous downward spiral of procrastination.

By consciously adding, 'what next?' to the proceeding action steps of, 'so what' and 'what so', I know I make better decisions by giving time to process, consider, and plan what to do next. By acknowledging my feelings and seeking a sense of balance in the situation, I have time to breathe and destress. We live in fast-moving times where we can feel out of control when life and work merge into one – it's like someone has removed the 'off switch'. In some ways, it seems just a blink ago that we returned to work at the start of 2023, and now we are a quarter of the way through the year with the Easter holiday break fast approaching.



If you are having time off work around the Easter break, take time to breathe and be reflexive, have some quality 'me' time, as well as enjoying good food and time with friends and family.

**Stuart Terry**  
AAIR President



Reference: Giddens, A. (1991) Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.



## EDITORIAL

Dear newsletter readers

After the last edition of the newsletter, I had the pleasure to attend my friend's wedding in Kathmandu. What a wonderful opportunity to be present to see my friend marry his sweetheart in a traditional Nepalese ceremony. During my stay in Kathmandu, I had the opportunity to visit some of the nearby cities. One place I enjoyed visiting was Bhaktapur, one of 3 medieval cities in the Kathmandu valley (see photo). The city is a mixture of a Hindu and Buddhist population. Unfortunately, in April 2015 the "city of culture" was destroyed during a 7.9 magnitude earthquake, causing loss of life and terrible devastation of some of the historically important temples. Nevertheless, the city has been steadily getting back on its feet and is now one of the most valuable historical cities in Nepal. Although it was sad seeing the devastation caused by the earthquake, it was fascinating to see how a developing country was rebuilding a lot of its culture, mostly by hand, and with none of the technology we currently experience.

Andrew Bradshaw  
Editor, The Institutional  
Researcher

## SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

How Degree Completion Tracking Can Save Both Time and Money. Technology has changed our lives in more ways than we can count—our professional lives especially. Things that used to take days can happen in minutes, and we've all become more interconnected than ever before. For the registrar's office, that means more access to records, information and students themselves. (The EvoLLLution 5 Jan)

Keep in Touch: How to Increase Student Engagement and Retention Through Text. Student engagement and retention strategies must keep up with modern student needs. Reaching them through the devices they carry daily—their phones—can help ensure they see the right information at the right time and boost student retention year after year. (The EvoLLLution 5 Jan)

Lifting on-line teaching to meet learning standards - The pre-pandemic education standards HE providers must meet are still fit for purpose but on-line delivery needs updating. The Department of Education commissioned a Uni Queensland team\* to investigate what the move to mass on-line learning and teaching will mean for conforming to the Higher Education Standards Framework. (CMM 23 Jan)

Rave reviews for CRCs. The Cooperative Research Centre programme is 'working well, delivering on objectives, and meeting an identified need,' so well it only needs 'minor adjustments' and should continue – with more money. A review, commissioned by the Commonwealth from consultants ACIL Allen, also finds that while it is too early to tell, 'indications' for the newish, shorter-term CRC Project scheme, 'are very promising'. (CMM 23 Jan)

How Uni Melbourne intends to reduce reliance on casual staff. Last year management committed to "overhauling its employment model" – so how's that going in enterprise bargaining? The university's proposal for a new agreement addresses payment of casual academics – getting this right has been a problem at the university in recent years. (CMM 23 Jan)

More of the similar for bushfire research. Western Sydney U is to lead a collaborative research centre on bushfires and natural hazards. The new organisation is funded by the NSW government and takes over from the Uni Wollongong led Bushfire Management

Research Hub (WSU was a participant). (CMM 23 Jan)

Sunk costs in shipbuilding skills. Opposition SA senator Simon Birmingham says the Naval Shipbuilding College, based in Adelaide is set to close. This, he says, is a bad thing, because, "one of the biggest risks to successful naval shipbuilding in Australia are workforce challenges." CMM asked the Department of Defence if the closure claim is so, but alas, DoD did not respond. (CMM 23 Jan)

Enrolment Management: An Evolving Profession and Practice. The future of enrolment management is primed to change drastically. More interdependent units and interdisciplinary programs, lifelong pathway planning and data analytics will push higher education institutions to better meet student needs. (The EvoLLLution 23 Jan)

What fresh VET hell is this? The current VET system has 1200 qualifications, 1500 skill sets, and 15,000 Units of Competency – Jobs and Skills Australia will get on to it. According to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the peak body will work with the new jobs and skills councils, to 'align workforce planning activities for their industry sectors, creating a uniform understanding of the skills landscape and developing appropriate strategies to address workforce challenges and skill gaps.' (CMM 24 Jan)

Uni path too travelled. Young people thinking about post school study can be pointed towards higher education when there are other options. In the common absence of qualified career advisors in schools "students are mystified by the multiple, state-based pathways they see on-line or in generic fliers. The result is that many Australian students base essential career and study decisions on information from parents, peers, and social media." (CMM 24 Jan)

Assets inoculated unis against COVID hit. Balance sheets grew stronger during the pandemic. The value of assets on the balance sheets of the 37 universities in the public system increased by 24 per cent, or \$19.7bn in 2018-21, according to a new analysis by Frank Larkins (Uni Melbourne) in CMM. Overall, assets are concentrated in the big six (Uni Queensland, Uni Sydney, UNSW, ANU, Monash U and Uni Melbourne). Uni Melbourne alone had total assets valued at \$106bn in 2021, 10.6 per cent of the system total. "The concentration of financial resources among a few universities is necessary to



achieve international competitiveness especially in research," Professor Larkins argues. However, of the 11 universities with the highest proportional total asset growth in 2018-21 rank below 20. (CMM 25 Jan)

VET gets the job done. Universities are sold hard to future students (CMM 24 Jan) but people who find their way to training are happy. The estimable National Centre for Vocational Education Research reports its 2022 student survey results. (CMM 25 Jan)

Uni Melbourne announces anti-racism commitment. "We are committed to addressing our history, its legacies and contemporary racism, by taking action to respond to and prevent racism in all of its forms at the University of Melbourne." In a statement released late yesterday the university committed to developing an anti-racism action plan through, "on-going consultation with our university community and informed by the lived experience of our students and staff." (CMM 25 Jan)

No deal at Charles Darwin U. Management had a big bargaining win in November -it's now a loss. CDU staff backed management's proposed enterprise agreement, which was fiercely opposed by the National Tertiary Education Union (CMM November 21). But the union questioned whether the agreement was genuinely adopted and the Fair Work Commission decided it wasn't. (CMM 27 Jan)

New VET agency, same VET data. New peak federal agency, Jobs and Skills Australia is charged with providing "reports and analysis of current, emerging, and future labour market, and workforce, skills and training needs" It's first report, on VET in regional, rural and remote Australia. JSA finds, (who would have thought), "training is driven to a large extent by local industries with higher enrolments in agricultural and engineering-related training when compared with major cities." (CMM 27 Jan)

Jig is up for gaming the research system. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency finalises its advice on research performance, closing a debate on how to measure research needed for existing institutions to keep their university title and new ones to qualify. Universities older than a decade must meet quality benchmarks for research in 50 per cent of fields of education (minimum three). Others must get there in a decade. (CMM 27 Jan)

Tech unis proposes working with more for what they've got. The Australian Technology Network's budget bid proposes new Commonwealth funding before the O'Kane Review reports. The ATN acknowledges the Universities Accord will propose changes for the medium and long term but it suggests ways HE can be better funded now (and presumably into the future). (CMM 30 Jan)

China tells on-line students: get back to class writes Dirk Mulder. A policy change requires in-country study. A weekend announcement by the Chinese Ministry of Education's Overseas Study Service Centre has ended pandemic-emergency approval for Chinese students at international universities to study on-line, from home. The announcement states that as foreign colleges and universities have resumed "off-line" teaching, as of January distance learning will not be certified. This is a policy change with big and immediate implications for Australian providers. (CMM 30 Jan)

Regulating on-line VET. The Australian Skills Quality Authority commissioned a review of on-line learning, following the Covid-caused expansion. It found "many students prefer the flexibility of blended learning," which presents providers, "with opportunities to expand their offerings and provide students with more choices across the market. (CMM 30 Jan)

ACU says training grad teachers takes two years. The NSW Government proposes a one-year teaching diploma for graduates who want to become school teachers. Australian Catholic U, suggests "simple solutions are not always appropriate choices". The NSW proposal occurs in the lead-up to the state election and builds on the local productivity commission's plan to address the teacher shortage. (CMM 30 Jan)

Big call for UNE chancellor to go. In December staff and graduates of the University of England voted for Chancellor James Harris to resign – the margin was decisive. The vote occurred at an unprecedented meeting of the university's convocation – called following extended campus disquiet over the implementation of former VC Bridget Heywood's restructure plan and the university council's support for her in the weeks leading up to her resignation last year, following assault charges, (CMM December 5 and 14). Professor Heywood denies the charges and the case is listed for mention in court today. The 410 to 46 vote for Mr Harris to go is reported in the

draft minutes of the meeting, circulated to convocation members yesterday. (CMM 31 Jan)

The Chinese student arrival challenge: it's looking do-able writes Dirk Mulder. There is emerging confidence that those who want to be here for first semester can be. On the weekend China announced nationals enrolled with overseas universities must be on campus for the start of the imminent semester (CMM yesterday). With a bare month to go this looked like an impossible ask for Chinese students enrolled, but not yet in, Australia. (CMM 31 Jan)

Western Sydney U delivers on precedent-setting job promise. WSU opens recruitment for casual academics who want ongoing jobs. The 30 positions are the first of 150, agreed by management and the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union, as part of the new enterprise agreement for the university (CMM July 26 2022). They are for junior continuing positions and open to eligible WSU casuals. (CMM 1 Feb)

Schmidt of ANU to step down: "I am realistic about a VC's 'shelf-life'". ANU VC announces he will return to research and teaching at the university, year-end. Professor Schmidt announced his exit, after seven years, in his "state of the university" address to staff yesterday. (CMM 3 Feb)

Curtin U pitches pay offer direct to staff. Management goes it alone – with the union opposing. The university offer includes an 11 per cent pay rise across the life of the agreement, short of the National Tertiary Education Union's 15 per cent national ask. Management also points to improved leave entitlements and a staff right to request flexible/remote work. (CMM 3 Feb)

Schmidt sets exit objectives. In his state of the university address yesterday ANU VC Brian Schmidt C sets out what he wants to happen in his last year. "When I look at my job application from 2015, almost everything I said I wanted to achieve as vice chancellor is well on its way," he said. "This does not mean there is not still lots to do, and we won't let the pace slacken this year just because I am finishing up. We are not following my plan – we are following our collective plan." (CMM 3 Feb)

Former staff gone but not forgotten by QUT records. The university contacted former staff this week advising personal information was accessed off a central storage drive in the pre-Christmas cyber-



attack. The thieves accessed IDs and banking records. QUT confirms 11 405 people are “impacted” – including 70 students, and 2490 current staff. So why, were the records of thousands of former members of the QUT community still held, CMM asked. (CMM 3 Feb)

[Legislation against cyber cheating just got harder to enforce.](#) ChatGPT’s creator makes a point of protecting against academic dishonesty. It’s not a big deal but for now it might have to do. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency has legislative power to “protect and enhance the academic integrity of courses provided by higher education providers by prohibiting academic cheating services.” (CMM 6 Feb)

[Back to bargaining at Griffith U.](#) In December GU professional staff voted for a management offer on wages and conditions but academics didn’t. The National Tertiary Education Union opposed the prop on a range of issues, including the offered pay rise, workloads and changes to free speech protections set out in the 2017 agreement, (CMM December 9 and 14). (CMM 7 Feb)

[Uni lobby finds a way to source new funds for research.](#) The Innovative Research Universities lobby wants unis to have access to the National Reconstruction Fund. The \$15bn NRF will “provide finance for projects that diversify and transform Australia’s industry and economy” in key industries – but it will not hand out grants. This might look final for university researchers – but not to the IRU which recommends the new resources fund support research, through a “mechanism to invest some of its ‘positive portfolio rate of return’ ... to help drive future innovation.” (CMM 7 Feb)

[Charles Darwin U in no mood to give in.](#) Management lost a big bargaining win when the Fair Work Commission ruled against it. In November CDU won a staff vote for an enterprise agreement offer that the National Tertiary Education Union bitterly opposed. Management offered a pay rise below the union demand and did not address workplace conditions the comrades considered crucial (CMM November 21). (CMM 7 Feb)

[Few rooms for international students where they are needed writes Dirk Mulder.](#) It’s more than a Sydney and Melbourne problem. January was the biggest month by revenue bookings for Australian Homestay Network since David Bycroft established the company in 2008 – 40 per cent up on the previous record month, January 2019. “Demand is

clearly higher than supply,” he says and hosted accommodation is one of few options left in a market that can’t accommodate demand from local renters and international students. (CMM 8 Feb)

[Upskilling for accountants.](#) Accountancy grads who want to be chartered can fund their course via FEE HELP – but only if they study with a particular professional body. And pleased indeed is Chartered Accountants ANZ, which says it is good news for accountants, who have to pay full-fees to qualify and for SME practices which “now can attract and retain talent as part of their employee proposition.” (CMM 8 Feb)

[Group of Eight here to help National Reconstruction Fund.](#) The research universities lobby acknowledges the National Reconstruction Fund “is not intended to directly support Australian university research,” but the Go8 has ideas on how they can help each other. In its submission to the Commonwealth’s consultation paper on how the \$15bn National Reconstruction Fund can work, the Group of Eight acknowledges the NRF will be required to generate a positive return on its investments. (CMM 8 Feb)

[Macquarie U stuffed-up casual academics’ pay.](#) The university announces under and over payments. In a message to staff yesterday, Chief People Officer David Ward stated that although a review “confirmed a high level of accuracy in our payments, some issues were identified.” It appears MU has only discovered the “issues” recently – there is no provision for disputed unpaid wages in the university’s last annual report. (CMM 9 Feb)

[Calls for research system redesign.](#) The Australian Academy of Science wants a “plausible redesign of the research system.” There are 200 reasons why. That’s the number of federal government science programmes, spread across 13 portfolios. “With multiple ministers and departments having key responsibilities,” it is, the academy argues, “an overly bureaucratized and inefficient system.” (CMM 8 Feb)

[Attrition not the issue it was.](#) Used to be that conservative ministers got stuck into universities over attrition – made a change from sneering at humanities research. There was certainly a hurricane of harrumphing in 2018, carefully addressed by Andrew Norton, Ittima Cherastidtham and Will Mackey in a report for the Grattan Institute (CMM April 30 2018). (CMM 10 Feb)

[What’s next for Monash U Business School.](#) It has spent a bunch of time and money, improving student satisfaction and research rankings – now Head of School Simon Wilkie says it’s time for the next act. Professor Wilkie announces an intent to change how government and business see the school, from a “service provider of education or research to that of a trusted partner.” (CMM 10 Feb)

[Short and to the VET point.](#) A House of Reps committee is conducting an inquiry into community perceptions, and status, of vocational education and training. It’s early days, but the first submission nails two big issues. Former TAFE official Robin Shreve includes two fundamentals on what needs doing to improve the first objective and lift the second. (CMM 10 Feb)

[Braced for bad news at Australian Catholic Uni.](#) The university advises its plan to cut 110 FTE professional positions will be out this week. Which will have surprised as many as none who fear they are in the gun. ACU announced in November it needed \$30m in savings, of which \$16.3m would come from cuts to professional staff (CMM November 23). Yesterday’s announcement triggered the formal consultation required by the university’s enterprise agreement. (CMM 14 Feb)

[Another look at the ARC.](#) The Education Department is reviewing the Australian Research Council’s performance, “in assessing foreign interference and national security risks in the context of grant decisions.” It is part of the Albanese Government’s response, published yesterday, to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security’s report on foreign interference and national security risks in higher education and research, tabled before last year’s election (CMM March 28 2022). (CMM 15 Feb)

[Unis that did well with offshore enrolments 2019-’21 by Claire Field.](#) Last week’s excellent International Education Association of Australia Global Competitiveness and Growth Symposium canvassed a range of issues as the sector welcomes international students back to campuses here in Australia and reflects on its current levels of offshore delivery and if/how to expand them. (CMM 15 Feb)

[Working with what the government wants for \\$15bn industry plan.](#) Lobbies pitch for access to the National Reconstruction Fund with arguments that meet their needs but Science and Technology Australia responds to what



the government signals it wants, with one modest ask. STA's submission to the consultation paper for the fund acknowledges that the NRF is not for discovery research and early stage R&D, but suggests the NRF board should "forward scout projects emerging" from applied research agencies and programmes – the Economic Accelerator, CRCs, ARC centres of excellence and "innovations developed" at NCRIS facilities. (CMM 16 Feb)

[MP explains what makes research applications a "nightmare"](#).

A parliamentary committee is inquiring into the administration of government grants – one member spoke from lived experience. A hearing last week was burdened by bmf, as officials explained process but this did not deter medical researcher Michelle Ananda-Rajah, the new, Labor, member for Higgins. (CMM 16 Feb)

[First semester strike at Uni Queensland](#).

Union members will go out on day three of classes. National Tertiary Education Union members will take protected industrial action for the day, next Wednesday, as part of their enterprise bargaining campaign. There will be a "high vis" event at the gates of the St Lucia campus first thing and a morning rally at the Great Court. Campus observers say no one really knows how many lectures won't happen. (CMM 16 Feb)

[Grand tertiary alliance ready for trial by skills combat](#).

Universities only got on Jobs and Skills Australia's legislated call list by the grace of Senator David Pocock (Ind ACT), (CMM October 28 2022) – but peak bodies are making the most of the opportunity. A submission to the Jobs and Skills Australia discussion paper calls for tertiary education providers to be included in the JSA advisory group. The pitch comes from what only cynics would describe as an unholy alliance of Universities Australia, TAFE Directors Australia, Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia and Independent Higher Education Australia. (CMM 17 Feb)

[UNSW backs the Voice to Parliament](#).

The university affirms support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the call, "to enshrine a First Nations Voice in the Constitution". A media release Friday announced the affirmation is in, "a formal statement approved by the university's Management Board." Apparently, "the statement reinforces the university's ongoing commitment to an equitable and just society. UNSW recognises that the

detail of the Voice is subject to ongoing consultations involving Indigenous peoples, government and the community." (CMM 20 Feb)

[Tech eng lobby gets the message on National Reconstruction Fund](#).

The Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering sets out how the National Reconstruction Fund can meet government mandates. In its submission to the Commonwealth's consultation paper, ATSE proposes ways the fund can invest in most of the industries the government nominates for the fund. (CMM 20 Feb)

[Unis run like greedy corporations: union chief](#).

"It is heartbreaking our public universities are being run like greedy corporations with no respect for paying hard-working staff what they're owed," NTEU president Alison Barnes says. Universities have underpaid higher education staff \$83m "in recent years" according to a new report from the National Tertiary Education Union. The union states it reached the figure by analysing 34 separate cases, where amounts are disclosed, at 22 public universities, with three more cases on-going. (CMM 20 Feb)

[Monash U's new equity, diversity, inclusion, framework](#).

The new statement replaces the original, covering 2018–21, which the university acknowledges had two limitations, "disparate, duplicated reporting" and "a lack of knowledge and application of intersectionality." "By containing our work to action plans supporting key marginalised identities, we have not adequately captured many people's lived experiences that cross between and through these identities" Monash states. (CMM 20 Feb)

[Waiting on the vote outcome at Curtin Uni](#).

Staff voted on a management pay and conditions offer last week – the union wants to know the result. The offer is opposed by the National Tertiary Education Union, and management went to staff after a tough bargaining round. The poll closed on Thursday and NTEU general secretary Damien Cahill wants to know the result. He wrote to VC Harlene Hayne on Saturday, asking for the result to be released by 5pm yesterday, arguing, "it is highly unusual for results not to be announced quickly." Dr Cahill added NTEU members at Curtin U are scheduled to take protected industrial action over enterprise bargaining today and that the results are needed, "in order that members of the NTEU are not inadvertently put at risk by having their

action deemed unprotected industrial action through no fault of their own." (CMM 20 Feb)

[The burden of bureaucracy on paying casuals](#).

At Senate Estimates last week Rachel Volzke from the Fair Work Ombudsman mentioned the way universities manage paying casual academics; "across the university sector, there did seem to be a culture of divesting responsibility for payments, recording of hours et cetera without central regulation and oversight of payment methods as well." (CMM 21 Feb)

[Edith Cowan U starts going to town](#).

Work starts on its Perth CBD campus site. The project is part of the Perth City Deal, a state-federal programme that dates from the days of PM Turnbull (Turnbull? oh come-on, you remember Malcolm the urbane). Originally the deal also included Murdoch U – but MU bailed last year, on its 2020 plan for an international college with 10 000 staff and students, stating that it would focus on a big development (CMM 22 June 2022) on its campus, across the river from the city, (CMM 22 June 2022), which opened last week. (CMM 21 Feb)

[Curtin U loses staff vote](#).

Question is what it will do next. Curtin U management has not announced the actual vote on its proposed enterprise agreement offer (CMM yesterday). But Provost Jeremy Kilburn and COO Fiona Notley did tell staff "that a majority of our employees who voted did not approve the proposed new agreement." (CMM 21 Feb)

[Jason Clare on-song with policy](#).

The education minister addresses the Universities Australia conference tonight – the text is for an optimistic speech in the positive spirit of his first UA address, not long after last year's election. Mr Clare will speak on the Universities Accord discussion paper now out, which delivers on what he promised last year, a review "looking at everything from funding and access, to affordability, transparency, regulation, employment conditions and also how universities and TAFEs and other higher education and vocational education providers and training institutions work together." (CMM July 7 2022). (CMM 22 Feb)

[Mary O'Kane on the Accord opportunity: think big and be bold](#).

The chair of the review asks for submission on, "what the system should look like in 30 years and how we get there". The discussion paper for the Australian Universities Accord is released today, inviting "input" on "actions and solutions" for the HE system



needed in 30 years, plus, “to address immediate challenges.” “Whatever form your submission takes, be bold. Think big and think beyond the immediate challenges, Professor O’Kane urges. New advice to the Accord will follow 180 submissions and 190 survey responses to its terms of reference. (CMM 22 Feb)

[Uni Sydney goes for broke with big offer direct to staff.](#) In a message to staff last night Provost Annamarie Jagose put on the table a compound 15.4 per cent pay rise through to 2026– which is largely in-line with the National Tertiary Education Union federal leadership’s pay demand. Plus, the university also backs-off its original push for changes to the all-academic 40 per cent research-40 per cent teaching – 20 per cent service work model. “We now propose to protect the 40 per cent research allocation, unless a change is agreed by the staff member,” the provost states. And she sets a 25 per cent cap on “education-focused academics” in the continuing and fixed term workforce. (CMM 22 Feb)

[VET compliance audits: improving performance or problems being missed by Claire Field.](#) In 2016-17 audits by regulator ASQA identified 200 critical or serious compliance issues. In 2021-22 it found 15. The Productivity Commission’s Report on Government Services (ROGS) shows that in 2021, more than one in every five dollars of recurrent government expenditure in VET went to non-TAFE providers. And that the share of recurrent funding going to TAFE decreased by 10 per cent between 2020 and 2021. (CMM 22 Feb)

[International grads get to stay two more years.](#) This means four for “select” bachelors and six for all doctoral degrees – and the student workright cap is up from 40 to 48 hours a fortnight. Ministers Jason Clare (Education) and Clare O’Neil (Home Affairs) announced the new caps yesterday, calling them, “a practical change that will increase the availability of a well-trained and highly capable workforce to help ease current pressures.” (CMM 22 Feb)

[Gosh, there must be an election.](#) The NSW Government (at least for another five weeks) says a new Uni Newcastle campus is closer. The government announces it has signed its final agreement with the university for a new central coast venue, at Gosford. (CMM 23 Feb)

[UNE Council and Convocation split over chancellor.](#) University of New England Council has rejected a call from staff and

graduates for Chancellor James Harris to resign. A first meeting of the university’s Convocation, in November, voted (410-46) for Mr Harris to go and for council to appoint a successor “through an open and consultative process including with strong staff representation” (CMM December 5, 14). But Deputy Chancellor Jan McClelland advises Convocation, “Council considered but did not support the proposal for the UNE Chancellor to resign.” (CMM 23 Feb)

[More bargaining at Uni Sydney.](#) Uni Sydney’s offer on pay and conditions does not impress the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union. On Tuesday the university proposed (amongst a mass of other offers) a 15 per cent pay rise across the three-year agreement being negotiated, plus a \$2000 signing bonus, continuing jobs for 300 academic casuals and for no more than 25 per cent of continuing and fixed term academics to be education-focused. (CMM 23 Feb)

[Checking on the safety of campus secrets.](#) The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security is conducting yet another high-impact investigation and it is very interested in higher education and research. It’s a review of the Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme (set up in 2018), the legislation for which requires a review after its first three years. (CMM 23 Feb)

[New Science Priorities: “benefits for all Australians”.](#) In September, Industry and Science Minister Ed Husic promised “a national conversation that will inform development of the revitalised priorities and science statement,” (CMM 28 September 2022). Chief Scientist Cathy Foley is on to it. There’s a paper on process and participation to, “identify what are the biggest national challenges are and what are the opportunities that we could seize.” (CMM 24 Feb)

[WA inquiry into “structural change” for unis.](#) The states VCs already know what they think. The state government announces an independent review, “to consider how structural change could strengthen the local university sector and delivery for students.” why? Premier Mark McGowan and Education Minister Tony Buti point to a declining share of Commonwealth research grants, “relatively” low enrolment growth and the state’s 5 per cent share of Australia’s international student revenue. (CMM 24 Feb)

[ANU and Macquarie U to partner on access to each other’s courses.](#)

International undergraduates at one will be able to take a for-credit semester at the other. The exchange programme has exclusions, notably in medicine at both. The offers build on a 2021 agreement to cooperate on international recruitment with MU looking to grow UG numbers and ANU expanding postgrads. Plus, the two universities will offer 10 per cent off postgrad course costs for all of each other’s alumni. (CMM 24 Feb)

[Ed Husic to do a Ben Chifley.](#) The nation is in the mood for modern manufacturing heroes. The AFR’s Paul Smith reports Industry and Science Minister Ed Husic complimenting Malcolm Turnbull for his innovation policy investment in quantum computing. The minister is right – like him, Mr Turnbull believed in science and technology to grow the economy. (CMM 24 Feb)

[Sarah Henderson gets the hang of opposition.](#) In her Universities Australia speech last week the new coalition shadow minister for education had a go at the government over the Accord. It is, she said, “delayed action” claiming it will be two years minimum, before there is a plan. “Labor had nine years to formulate a policy, but I think it’s fair to say that they did not do a sufficient amount of work.” Good-o, but having a national plan to transform higher education in opposition is a bit of an ask. (CMM 27 Feb)

[Time for Uni Tas management to pad up.](#) A committee of Tasmania’s Legislative Council resumes hearings into the provisions of the state university’s Act on Wednesday. While the terms of reference are of generous width there was a focus last year on the university’s move into the Hobart CBD and property development plans for the Sandy Bay campus. (CMM 27 Feb)

[There must be an election on.](#) The prime minister and colleagues announce \$10m for the Energy Futures Skills Centre at Uni Wollongong and \$2.m for a renewable energy training facility at Wollongong TAFE. The NSW state election is on March 25. At least it is a new announcement. Last week the NSW coalition government announced, again, a new Uni Newcastle campus (CMM February 23). (CMM 27 Feb)

[Murdoch U starts the sell.](#) The day after the WA Government announced an inquiry into structural change for the state’s four public universities Murdoch U makes a big announcement – there will be a bit of this from some of the others. On



Friday the university opened its Murdoch U starts the sell, at the state Food Innovation Precinct, south of Perth. Apparently, Murdoch's specialised campus establishes a world-class destination for food professionals and researchers committed to advancing knowledge and production of food that is both good to eat and good for you. (CMM 27 Feb)

[Uni lobby defends members against pay allegations.](#) The university management IR lobby says underpaying casual staff is not deliberate and its members are fixing it. The 32-member Australian Higher Education Industrial Association has responded to allegations that universities are committing "wage theft," calling them "misleading and deliberately inflammatory." (CMM 27 Feb)

[More of the same in selling education to India.](#) Education Minister Jason Clare is joined by 11 vice chancellors and five lobby representatives. The minister is going, in part to sign the rules for mutual recognition under the free trade agreement, governing access to education in both countries. These include Mr Clare says, "the qualifications we provide on-line and off-shore." (CMM 28 Feb)

[Curtin U management walloped in staff vote.](#) The university put an enterprise agreement offer to staff which the National Tertiary Education opposed – this wasn't wise. Management advised staff yesterday that the offer was rejected 78 per cent against and 22 per cent in favour. That this was the voice of the Curtin community is clear – some 79 per cent of eligible staff turned out to vote. (CMM 28 Feb)

### Ranking and Rating

[Ratings agency cautious on immediate benefits of China arrivals.](#) S&P states they will be "a boost" for universities and the broader economy but in the short-term could reduce revenues, as Chinese students who cannot get to Australia for first semester defer in the light of their government's new requirement they must study on campus. (CMM 2 Feb)

[Aus unis R&D achievement: not as good as it looks.](#) It's the results of long-past commitments. Australian universities lead the world when the major rankings are referenced by GDP, according to a new analysis of UNSW's Aggregate Ranking of Top Universities by Nicholas Fisk and Thomas Chown (both UNSW). (CMM 7 Feb)

[Student Progress Rates set to slide.](#) In Features this morning Angel Calderon (RMIT) looks at the just released 2021 student data stats and reports 28 public universities collectively recorded a small decline in the progress rate. He expects the same for two-three more years. For '22 this will be due in part to, "the disruption caused by the pandemic. But the low completion requirement of the previous government's Job Ready Graduates rules will have an impact, "resulting in hundreds of students being discontinued due to poor academic performance." (CMM 27 Feb)

## LEARNING & TEACHING

### Employability & Graduate Outcomes

[Grim expectations, ok outcome.](#) The QILT 22 grad satisfaction survey is out (scroll down) with an "overall satisfaction" score, but not responses for teaching and generic skills – these were deleted at the request of the industry-group which advises the government. The survey report makes no mention why but anticipation of the COVID caused switch to on-line classes might have had something to do with it. (CMM 14 Feb)

[Grad employment looking good.](#) Employment of domestic grads with new UG degrees was well off the pandemic bottom last year, as set out by new survey results from the Commonwealth's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching. At 78.5 per cent, FT employment for 2022 was nearly ten per cent up on the '20 (68.7 per cent) and '21 (68.9 per cent) figures. Overall employment was also up, but by around 4 per cent on both previous years, to 88.3 per cent. The FT employment rate for undergraduate degree completers is the highest since 2009. (CMM 14 Feb)

## BIG DATA, DATA ANALYTICS, BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

[Checking-out ChatGPT.](#) OpenAI announces "a classifier," "to distinguish between text written by a human and a text written by AIs from a variety of providers". The creator of panic de jour, ChatGPT announces its product "correctly identifies" 26 per cent of AI-written text. The more text, the better the system gets. (CMM 2 Feb)

[TEQSA warns on AI.](#) Chief Commissioner Peter Coaldrake states the power of new tools requires a deep think on approaches to teaching and learning and assessment practices. However, the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency is

interested in more than academic integrity. In a letter to HE providers yesterday Professor Coaldrake also pointed to, the potential for AI in preparing grant applications and writing research papers. (CMM 2 Feb)

[The AI opportunity to transform foreign language learning.](#) Culture should be the core content of foreign language teaching, but "unfortunately linguistic competence has instead always been the primary focus". Yong Zhao (Melbourne Graduate School of Education) makes the case in a new paper for Uni Melbourne's AsiaLink. The problem is, even after ten years study, "very few students can truly achieve native or near native speaker proficiency," the reasons why are not enough hours learning, few opportunities for immersion and a focus on passing tests. (CMM 6 Feb)

[AI research creators: we ain't seen nothing yet.](#) In CMM's Expert Opinion Tim Cahill sets out where we are and where we are heading. While much of the academic argument around ChatGPT and its emerging ilk is about the impact on teaching and learning, Tim Cahill (Research Strategies Australia) points to extraordinary changes in research. (CMM 13 Feb)

[What to do with old academics.](#) With 29 per cent of Level D and E researchers 60 and older – there are multiple challenges for uni managements. "If universities are going to continue to rely on the productivity of older staff, changes in culture, adaption of workplace safety equipment and new approaches to engagement are likely to be required, Tim Winkler and colleagues argue in a paper for the new HEJobs recruitment site. (CMM 13 Feb)

[Uni Melbourne in court over casuals' pay.](#) The FWO alleges the university underpaid casual staff in the Faculty of Arts. The Ombudsman specifically alleges that the university, "failed to record all hours worked by the casual academics, and further that the University made and kept records known to some managers within the Faculty to be false or misleading." (CMM 13 Feb)

[A fund for the future of science research.](#) Research lobbies want access to the proposed National Reconstruction Fund (CMM February 6,7 and 8) but Science and Technology Australia wants a resource for researchers to call their own. STA's budget submission calls for a science equivalent of the Medical Research Future Fund, "a long-term





strategic investment pool that would 'level up' Australia's capacity for science breakthroughs, and secure Australia's economy and ability to address future challenges." (CMM 13 Feb)

**Monash U new digital ID.** Monash U is hiking parking fees in-line with CPI. Will, learned readers ask, people be able to pay via the new "M-Pass" That's the new digital ID for phones and Apple watches, replacing staff and student plastic cards. Is this a first for an Aus uni, (the digital ID not the parking price, that is)? (CMM 15 Feb)

## REPORTS AND RESOURCES

**International ed providers need to lift their games** (writes Claire Field). Key Commonwealth agencies specify what's needed. Anyone wondering if the new government shares the same concerns as their predecessors about Australia's international education sector (especially the lack of diversity in higher education) would only have to read three submissions to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's 'Inquiry into Australia's Tourism and International Education Sectors' to find the answer. And that answer is a resounding yes – universities in particular will need to do better. (CMM 25 Jan).

**Australia now a best-offer in international ed writes Dirk Mulder.** The changes (CMM 22 Feb) mean Australia has the potential to leapfrog many competitor countries' offers and come at an opportune time. The UK is still deciding whether its international student intake should be reduced, Canada is dealing with international enrolment and experience issues, and the USA is slowly rebuilding from COVID and Trump. Australia may now be the best offer on the global stage if it wasn't already. (CMM 23 Feb)

**Radical reform, by stealth in the UK.** Higher education funding in England is facing the most radical upheaval since 2012 – the bill responsible gets a second reading in the House of Commons today, and we expect the government to respond to its last consultation on it imminently. The key idea behind the Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) is that it should be possible to mix and match shorter courses and accumulate credit over time – up to a maximum of the equivalent of four years' full-time study. In theory, to make this possible, standard courses need to be able to be chunked into smaller units of credit, and the

associated fee/funding reformed to allow these smaller chunks to attract loan finance. (Wonkhe 28 Feb)

**The importance of trust and authenticity among stakeholders involved in higher education data infrastructure redevelopment: An Australian critical discourse study** This critical discourse study explores the discourses, discursive strategies and perspectives surrounding TCSI. Findings included HEP issues and concerns that the interviewees believed were inadequately addressed or ignored despite the Department's claims of extensive engagement with HEPs to achieve mutually beneficial objectives. This study highlights the importance of trust and authenticity among stakeholders involved in major HE data infrastructure redevelopment projects and is the first known study of its kind in this context. Recommendations for TCSI and similar projects are provided, and broader implications for data infrastructure are discussed.

## POSITIONS VACANT

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## PODCASTS

**Higher Education Goes Mainstream** - Higher education has faced an

overwhelming—but necessary—amount of change and is now beginning to become more mainstream. As institutions find their bearings, they have to realize future sustainability will require time, money and patience. (The EvoLLLution 7 Jan)

**Understanding the Scale and Scope to Attract Modern Learners.** Competition is becoming fierce in higher education and relying on prestige and brand alone to attract students doesn't work anymore. To engage, attract and retain students, institutions will need to have scalable support and strategies in place. (The EvoLLLution 4 Feb)

[What is the future of education?](#)

## Episode 3: Education futures in teaching and research towards a vision of sustainability

In this episode, Elizabeth J. Cook and Prof Keri Facer Professor of the University of Bristol discuss the relationship between education and futures thinking, including how futures shape education, how we might consider and anticipate futures, while also effecting change in the education system. Prof Facer highlights the importance of dealing with the implications of certain futures (e.g., climate change) and suggests reading widely to aid ideation, innovation and connectivity. (27 Feb 2023)

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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

### 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.





INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCES & EVENTS

# LOOKING FOR AN EVENT?

Look no further!

AAIR finds the most relevant events in the IR space and brings them together for you on our website.



**CONFERENCES, EVENTS, TRAINING, PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT, WORKSHOPS, AND MORE ...**

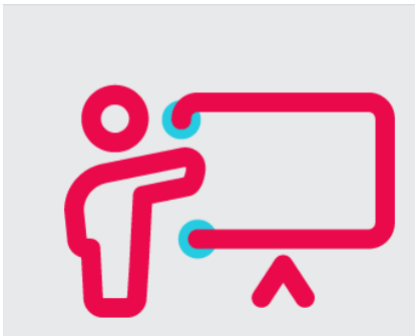
Click here to visit [air.org.au/events](https://air.org.au/events)



### 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](#).



### Altis Public Training Courses

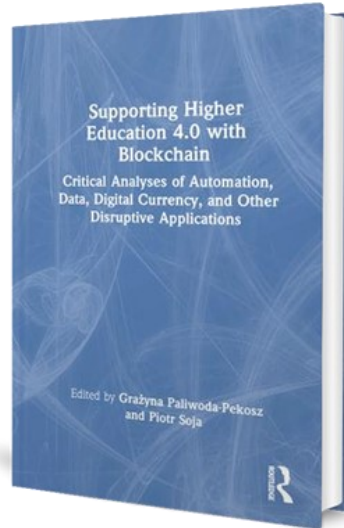
Build your Information Management knowledge and hone the skillsets required to manage the proliferation of organisational data. From strategic planning to implementation and management, our extensive suite of training courses provides you with critical insights and structured learning across the IM value chain.

Chris Kearns has also recently filmed a YouTube video that demonstrates a University Admissions Power BI report that may be relevant. Here is the link: <https://youtu.be/P-opil6J7Qc>

## GOOD READS

### Supporting Higher Education 4.0 with Blockchain

Grazyna pallwoda-Pekosz and Piotr Sojo



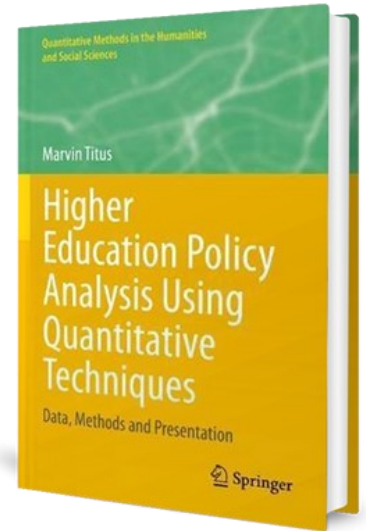
Supporting Education 4.0 with Blockchain explores the current and future impacts of blockchain technologies, such as cryptocurrency, on the education system. Blockchain is a disruptive technology based on a shared, distributed ledger, where transactions are registered by consensus in a network of peers, using cryptographic mechanisms that render the records virtually immutable and, ideally, enable transparency, auditability, and resilience. What role, then, could it play in fostering transformative approaches such student-centered teaching and learning, distributed learning environments, and lifelong learning?

This book provides essential perspectives into blockchain's applications and challenges within education and offers a broader view of blockchain technology against existing information and communication technologies used in education. Spanning the effects on institutions, students, and the labor market, these chapters offer critical reviews and analyses of current research, practical firsthand applications of blockchain in education, and original conceptual models.

Buy Now

### Higher Education Policy Analysis Using Quantitative Techniques

Marvin Titus



This textbook introduces graduate students in education and policy research to data and statistical methods in state-level higher education policy analysis. It also serves as a methodological guide to students, practitioners, and researchers who want a clear approach to conducting higher education policy analysis that involves the use of institutional- and state-level secondary data and quantitative methods ranging from descriptive to advanced statistical techniques.

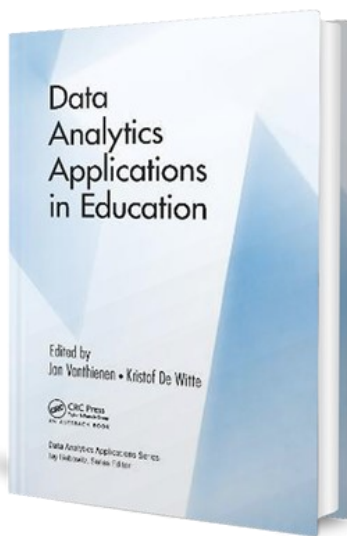
This book is unique in that it introduces readers to various types of data sources and quantitative methods utilized in policy research and in that it demonstrates how results of statistical analyses should be presented to higher education policy makers. It helps to bridge the gap between researchers, policy makers, and practitioners both within education policy and between other fields. Coverage includes identifying pertinent data sources, the creation and management of customized data sets, teaching beginning and advanced statistical methods and analyses, and the presentation of analyses for different audiences (including higher education policy makers).

Buy Now



### Data Analytics Applications in Education

Edited by Jan Vanthienen & Kristof De Witte



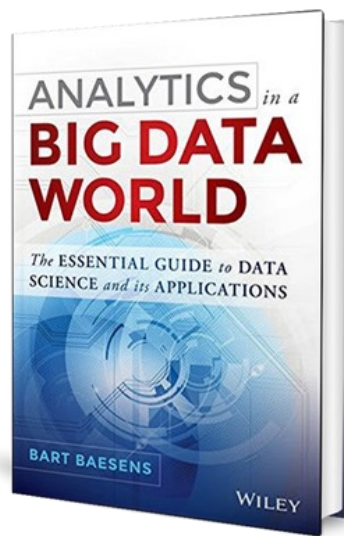
The abundance of data and the rise of new quantitative and statistical techniques have created a promising area: data analytics. This combination of a culture of data-driven decision making and techniques to include domain knowledge allows organizations to exploit big data analytics in their evaluation and decision processes. Also, in education and learning, big data analytics is being used to enhance the learning process, to evaluate efficiency, to improve feedback, and to enrich the learning experience.

As every step a student takes in the online world can be traced, analyzed, and used, there are plenty of opportunities to improve the learning process of students. First, data analytics techniques can be used to enhance the student's learning process by providing real-time feedback, or by enriching the learning experience. Second, data analytics can be used to support the instructor or teacher. Using data analytics, the instructor can better trace, and take targeted actions to improve, the learning process of the student. Third, there are possibilities in using data analytics to measure the performance of instructors. Finally, for policy makers, it is often unclear how schools use their available resources to "produce" outcomes. By combining structured and unstructured data from various sources, data analytics might provide a solution for governments that aim to monitor the performance of schools more closely.

[Buy Now](#)

### Analytics in a Big Data World – The Essential Guide to Data Science and its Applications

Bart Baesens



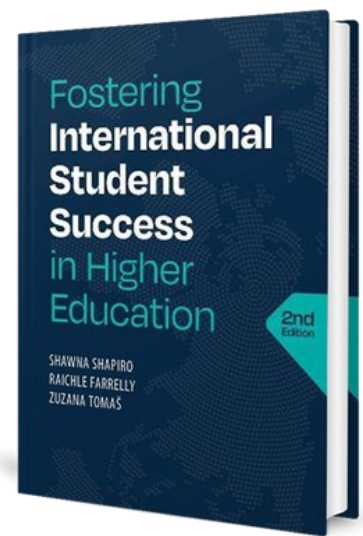
The guide to targeting and leveraging business opportunities using big data & analytics. By leveraging big data & analytics, businesses create the potential to better understand, manage, and strategically exploiting the complex dynamics of customer behavior. Analytics in a Big Data World reveals how to tap into the powerful tool of data analytics to create a strategic advantage and identify new business opportunities. Designed to be an accessible resource, this essential book does not include exhaustive coverage of all analytical techniques, instead focusing on analytics techniques that really provide added value in business environments.

The book draws on author Bart Baesens' expertise on the topics of big data, analytics and its applications in e.g. credit risk, marketing, and fraud to provide a clear roadmap for organizations that want to use data analytics to their advantage, but need a good starting point. Baesens has conducted extensive research on big data, analytics, customer relationship management, web analytics, fraud detection, and credit risk management, and uses this experience to bring clarity to a complex topic.

[Buy Now](#)

### Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education, Second Edition

Raichle Farrelly, Zuzana Tomas, and Shawna Shapiro



The increase in the number of international students attending English-dominant schools brings benefits as well as challenges for institutions. Shapiro, Farrelly, and Tomas provide a lively, informative discussion that answers the questions instructors commonly ask when seeking to ensure success for these students: What do I do to help students be successful in U.S. academic culture? How can I ensure that the content for my course is comprehensible to students who are still learning English? How do I design assignments and assessments that are fair while still acknowledging the difficulty of doing academic work in a second or foreign language? How might I treat international students as a linguistic and cultural asset in the classroom, and help them to become institutionally integrated?

The second edition of this best-selling book is filled with anecdotes, reflection questions, strategies, resources, and activities that can easily be adapted to curricula in various disciplines and provide instructors, as well as academic advisors and administrators, with tools for responding to common classroom challenges.

[Buy Now](#)



## ON THE MOVE

Michelle Bellingan starts as DVC Academic at Central Queensland U. She moves up from dean of health, medical and applied sciences.

Ngiare Brown will become James Cook U's chancellor in April. Professor Brown was foundation CEO of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association and is chair of the National Mental Health Commission.

Mark Erickson becomes registrar at Uni Southern Queensland. He moves from academic registrar at Uni Queensland. will join from QUT.

Alex Furman becomes VP Advancement at ANU. It's an internal appointment.

At Griffith U Cindy Shannon becomes DVC (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion). She moves up from Griffith's PVC Indigenous.

Sunny Yang leaves Monash U to become PVC Global Partnerships at Uni Newcastle.

Rob Brown becomes head of CQU's Mackay campuses, he moves from leading CQU in WA.

ANU's Brian Schmidt is the new Group of Eight chair. Mark Scott (Uni Sydney) is deputy.

Tony Cook will become secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Education in April. He steps up there, from dep sec for HE, research and international.

Sarah Henderson (Lib, Victoria) becomes the coalition's shadow education minister. She replaces Alan Tudge who retires from parliament. Senator Henderson moves from shadowing the communications portfolio.

[A long farewell for La Trobe U VC](#). John Dewar stays until January. Chancellor John Brumby announced the exit yesterday stating he has agreed with Professor Dewar for him to leave when his contract expires. Dewar became VC in 2012, moving from provost at Uni Melbourne. In 2019 university council extended his second term by three years.

Michael Hamilton becomes PVC and Chief Executive of Charles Darwin U TAFE.

## INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER #1

### Five quick questions with Markos Keir (Altis Consulting)

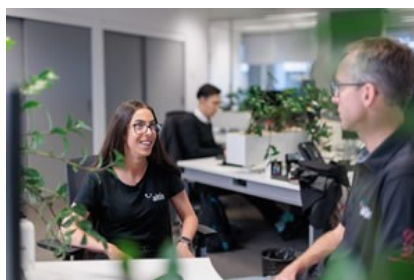


**Tell us about what Altis does and the specific assistance it offers its customers.**

Altis is the largest and most experienced specialist data analytics consulting firm in Australia and New Zealand, with over 150 permanent staff. Altis has extensive experience in the higher education sector, having worked with over 40 higher education customers and sponsoring 18 AAIR SIG Forums and AAIR Annual Forums since 2009. For 25 years, Altis has been combining industry expertise with technical capability to deliver tangible business outcomes while maintaining the Altis ethos of Connecting with Courage, Heart and Insight.

Some examples of the services we have delivered the 40+ different higher education customers we have worked with include:

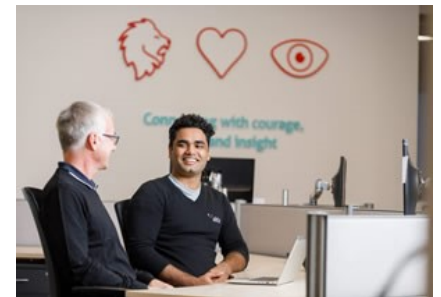
- data platform, data lake, data warehouse and business intelligence solutions across subject areas such as enrolment, load planning, student lifecycle, enquiries, applications and admissions, through to alumni and research, HR, IT, finance and facilities
- information management strategy and roadmaps
- data governance frameworks
- health checks
- toolset selections.



**Can you briefly summarise some of your collaborations with universities?**

In the last 12 months Altis has collaborated with several Australian universities. Here are summaries of some of our recent projects:

- Created a data strategy and detailed business case for the implementation of a significant data analytics platform.
- Designed and implemented a best practice Power BI reporting environment, produced a suite of reports for the reconciliation of TCSI back to source, and developed several ETL processes.
- Implemented best practice reporting recommendations, including a revamped Power BI reporting template, and guidance on transitioning to a new Power BI Portal. Dashboards delivered included a student dashboard for easy tracking of student pipeline from applications, offers, acceptances and enrolments, to EFTSL and headcount.
- Implemented data analytics requirements, current state assessment and future state design of student support services, including delivery of quick win dashboards across special considerations and recognition of prior learning.
- Delivered new data models and dashboards across finance, HR, and student assessments, and uplifted dashboard capability.



**What do you anticipate the needs of your clients to be in the age of 'disruption' in tertiary education? E.g. What are your thoughts on data and analytics for the future?**

There's a lot of noise in the industry right now in the areas of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). The recent public release of OpenAI's ChatGPT seems to have pushed it further into the mainstream and has many organisations considering the possibilities.



ChatGPT will provide many opportunities in the coming years, however, fundamentally you still need a solid core to build this on. Access to clean and reliable data always has and always will be the cornerstone of any analytics work. Strong data governance practices and traditional data warehousing techniques are still very much required. It's only after this is bedded in that it can be augmented with AI and ML.

### What has Altis learned from its involvement with the higher education sector in Australia and New Zealand?

Access to timely and accurate data for informed decision making is critical for universities. It's essential to help executives and administrators makes decisions, identify trends, and measure performance.

Universities have large government reporting requirements, and the effort to satisfy these can also be leveraged to provide greater insights across the university. The more mature the university, the more data sources are being ingested and modelled together to enrich data insights such as overall student lifecycle analysis.



### How can people connect with Altis?

If you would like to learn more about Altis and the tangible business outcomes that are possible for your university, then please contact our head office either by phone on +61 (2) 9211 1522, or by email at: [connect@altis.com.au](mailto:connect@altis.com.au); <https://www.altisconsulting.com/au/industries/higher-education/>

Chris Kearns, UK Regional Manager for Altis Consulting, demonstrates a university admissions Power BI report that showcases:

- Data visualisation best practices
- Drill-through
- Power BI embedded in a client-facing website
- Row-level security

- Write back from the report to an underlying database via a Power app

Admissions is a critical part of the student journey, and there are many stakeholders across the university with a keen interest in tracking the cumulative applications throughout the admissions process. The Altis team has created an admissions report for a fictitious university to allow those various stakeholders to engage with the application numbers at the level of detail that suits them. Chris walks through the admissions report in the Power BI service to demonstrate the various ways in which the cumulative applications can be analysed.

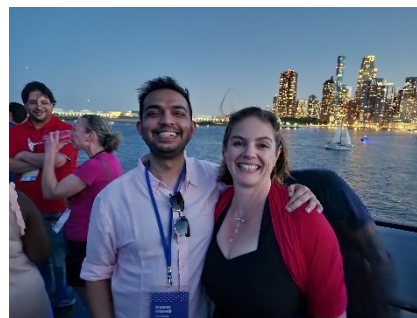
The university admissions report can be used as a starting point to engage stakeholders at your institution and fast-track the development of an admissions reporting solution that is 'right-sized' for you.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-opil6J7Qc&t=1s>

## INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER #2

### Five quick questions with Arjoman Chatterji (Explorance)



Tell us about what Explorance does and the specific assistance it offers its customers.

Explorance is a provider of people insight solutions. Our company empowers organisations with actionable decision-making by measuring students' and employees' needs, expectations, skills, knowledge, and competencies. Through

scalable automation with tools, such as Blue, Metrics That Matter, and expert-based services, Explorance facilitates continuous improvement and accelerates the insight-to-action cycle, leading to personal growth and organisational agility.



Explorance offers a suite of products, including Blue, which is a survey and data analytics platform designed to help organisations gather and analyse feedback not only from students, but also from employees and external customers. Blue provides a range of features, including survey design and distribution, real-time dashboards, and advanced analytics capabilities, such as sentiment analysis, predictive modelling, and data visualisation.

Additionally, Explorance offers professional services, support, and training, to help customers maximise the value of their investment in our solutions. Explorance also offers a variety of resources, including best practices guides, webinars, and case studies, to help our customers stay informed and up to date on the latest trends and innovations in feedback and data analytics.

Explorance helps its customers measure and improve their performance by providing a range of feedback and data analytics solutions to support their success.

Can you briefly summarise some of your collaborations with universities?

Explorance provides data analytics services and solutions to approximately 50% of higher education institutions in Australia and New Zealand. These solutions assist the institutions in



measuring and improving their performance.

Explorance has worked with higher education institutions to help them gather and analyse student feedback, understand the student experience, and identify areas for improvement.

Explorance has helped provide solutions that have provided universities with valuable insights into student engagement, course design, support services, and technology integration, including data and learning management system integration.

Explorance has also helped institutions in Australia and New Zealand leverage data analytics to better understand the impact of their programs and initiatives on student outcomes, such as enrolment, graduation rates, and student employment outcomes. Its advanced analytics capabilities, such as predictive analytics and machine learning, have supported data-driven decision-making and helped institutions stay ahead of the curve in an increasingly competitive and rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

Explorance's collaborations with universities have been designed to help institutions measure and improve their performance by providing valuable feedback and data analytics solutions.



**What do you anticipate the needs of your clients to be in the age of 'disruption' in tertiary education? e.g. What are your thoughts on data and analytics for the future?**

In the age of 'disruption' in tertiary education, institutions have shown a growing need for data and analytics tools that help them make better and more informed data decisions.

Explorance's range of analytics tools can provide valuable insights into student enrolment, graduation rates, student employment outcomes, and other key metrics.

Moving forward, institutions may be looking for ways to better understand the student experience and identify areas for

improvement, such as course design, support services, and technology integration.

As more institutions move towards online and hybrid models of learning, they may also be interested in tools that help them assess the quality and teaching effectiveness, as well as evaluate their impact on student outcomes. This will require access to robust datasets and advanced analytics capabilities, including predictive analytics, natural language processing, and machine learning.

The future of tertiary education will likely be driven by the increasing use of data and analytics to inform decision making, enhance the student experience, and support the transition to new models of learning.

**What has Explorance learned from its involvement with the higher education sector in Australia and New Zealand?**

Explorance's involvement with the higher education sector in Australia and New Zealand has provided institutions with valuable insights into the challenges and needs of this market.

One key finding has been the importance of student feedback and engagement in driving student success. Higher education institutions are looking for ways to better understand the student experience and identify areas for improvement. They are using student feedback data to inform decision making, enhance the student experience, and support the transition to new models of learning, such as online and hybrid models.

Another important learning has been the growing demand for data analytics tools that provide actionable insights. Institutions are looking for ways to better understand the impact of their programs and initiatives on student outcomes, such as enrolment, graduation rates, and student employment outcomes. They are seeking advanced analytics capabilities, such as predictive analytics and machine learning, to support data-driven decision-making.

Explorance has learned about the importance of customer support, professional services, and consulting in the higher education sector. Institutions are looking for solutions that are easy to use and implement, and they are seeking support and training to ensure they can maximise the value of their investment in feedback and data analytics solutions and offer valuable information through

consulting on how to leverage data-driven insights to make informed decisions.

Explorance's involvement in the higher education sector in Australia and New Zealand has provided valuable insights into the growing importance of student feedback, the demand for advanced data analytics, and the importance of customer support and professional services to help understand the value of data-driven analytics.



**How can people connect with Explorance?**

Information about our products and services can be found on our website at <https://explorance.com>.

You can also reach out to us directly by contacting Tim Brennan, General Manager, APAC via email [tbrennan@explorance.com](mailto:tbrennan@explorance.com) or via phone +61 417 317 729.

You can also reach out to me, Arjoman Chatterji, Solutions Engineer, APAC directly via email [achatterji@explorance.com](mailto:achatterji@explorance.com) or via phone +61 424 328 998.



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## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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A great way to get involved with the AAIR community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your IR colleagues? Please send your contributions to the [editor@aair.org.au](mailto:editor@aair.org.au).

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 [@AAIRaustralasia](https://twitter.com/AAIRaustralasia)



[Andrew Bradshaw](#)

Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

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## DISCLAIMER

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*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.*

