



AAIR Newsletter June 2023



Photo by Andrew Bradshaw – Storm building, Manly to Collaroy

**Latest Musings From
The President**

[PAGE 2](#)

Good Reads

... Plus a range of interesting reports and new publications this month. See [PAGE 19](#)

**Institutional Researcher's
Corner Interviews**

Five quick questions with Juan Laverde [PAGE 21](#)

CONTENT

[From the President](#)

[Editorial](#)

[AAIR News](#)

[Sector News and Views](#)

[Big Data, Data Analytics, Business Intelligence](#)

[Reports and Resources](#)

[Positions Vacant](#)

[Call for Submissions](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[AAIR Online Events](#)

[Podcasts and webinars](#)

[Training and Development](#)

[HE Conferences and Events](#)

[Other Events](#)

[On the Move](#)

[Good Reads](#)

[Time-saving hacks with ChatGPT](#)

[Institutional Researcher's Corner](#)

[Call for Contributions](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings as we head to the mid-winter solstice and the shortest day of the year.

I have mentioned in previous blogs that I am on a journey to complete my Doctor of Professional Practice where I am researching what influences the construction of professional identity for professional staff, specifically within vocational education. My journey has taken the more scenic route as I meander through tomes of literature and the many pages of transcripts from the 18 people I have interviewed. While I have been reading and reflecting, I have thought much more about the data I have collected. In my 'day job' as an organisational researcher, data has often been seen as the numbers and words collected to create a report so that our promotional team or leaders can say, 'Oh aren't we doing a great job, the reports show that '95% of our learners are happy', or '75% of our graduates have jobs''. But let's think for a moment, where did the data come from to create those percentages?



Data is a collection of information provided by humans. Yes! Actual people like you and me. It hasn't just arrived on your screen. So, who does the data belong to and what rights do you have to that data. The concept of data sovereignty has been gaining more prominence due to the increasing reliance on

digital technologies and the global nature of dataflows. It addresses concerns about privacy, security, and compliance with local regulations and cultural norms.

Data sovereignty emphasises the right of individuals, organisations (like universities), and governments, to have control over their own data and determine how it is collected, stored, processed, and transferred. This means that data subjects should have the right to determine who can access their data, how it is used, and for what purposes. The institutions we work for that collect and process data also have a responsibility to protect the privacy and security of that data. I know for me, and I am sure many of you are nodding your heads as you read this, know that the protection and security of data that you collect and report is an integral part of your role and the reports that you create or analyse or report. A core fundamental value at the front of my mind when I am working with data is thinking and behaving as an ethical practitioner and remaining focused on doing no harm.

Increasingly, indigenous communities are raising their voices wanting data about them to be respected, and to have sovereignty over the data that is collected from them and about them. Ngapera Riley (Te Arawa) is the CEO of [figure.nz](https://www.figure.nz) and writes that all data is important because it can help us to understand our world and our community, to measure and monitor the impacts of actions we take, and to monitor our community's wellbeing. From a Māori worldview, data is a living tāonga (treasure) with immense strategic value. It is an important tool in understanding the whenua (land) and the tangata whenua (people). It helps communities answer questions like how many people have ancestry to an iwi (tribe), where do they live, how are Māori learners doing in education, and what factors might change that. For many years, data has been used to inform narratives and policy decisions about Māori, but without their input.



Collecting more and better quality data can help us to understand and solve issues, and to support the aspirations of communities.

Similarly, the [Lowitja Institute](#) states that in the past, research has too often been done 'on' rather than 'for' or 'by', Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Indigenous data sovereignty enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to accurately reflect their stories, knowledge, and experiences in research, and empowers them to make the best decisions to support their communities in the ways that meet their needs and aspirations.

So, for us as professionals working with data, it is important for us to stand back and think about our data as more than numbers and words, and ask ourselves:

- Has it been collected, analysed, and reported in a culturally safe way, which is reflective of the ways of knowing, being and doing, from different cultural and indigenous groups?
- Is it being reported in a way that is respectful of and meaningful to different groups, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations?

We are often collecting important information like ancestry, language, traditional knowledge, and land remaining in the hands of the communities it belongs to. As guardians of data, we have a duty of care to support indigenous oversight on the collection and use of sensitive information about indigenous communities. We should not be the vectors to enable data to be used to discriminate against any specific communities.

The next time you look at your data, try to look at it through a different worldview lens. Make friends with your data, get to know it, and get to know where it comes from. You have a treasure in your hands that, treated respectfully, can empower and support you in so many different ways.

Last week Leone Nurbasari, Associate Director, Reporting and Analytics at The Australian National University, who has been a long-term member of AAIR and an Executive Committee member since 2016, stood down from the committee. Leone has led and supported our membership portfolio, and has been the welcoming face at our 'Newbie' introduction webinars. Leone has generously shared her extensive knowledge of business intelligence and analytics, as well as a breadth of understanding of higher education to the AAIR Executive Committee, and to AAIR as an organisation. I have valued the extensive contribution

she has made to the committee, and have always valued her open and welcoming approach.



We now have a vacancy on the Executive Committee, and I warmly welcome expressions of interest from any members who would like to join. If you are interested or keen to know more, please reach out to me or any of the [Executive Committee members](#), or our Executive Officer, [Liesha Northover](#). Come and share your knowledge and help AAIR continue to be one of the best professional associations in Australasia.

Stuart Terry
AAIR President



References:

- <https://blog.figure.nz/m%C4%81ori-data-sovereignty-67cbaobf109>
- https://www.lowitja.org.au/icms_docs/328550_data-governance-and-sovereignty.pdf



EDITORIAL

Dear newsletter readers

The year is almost halfway through, and for many of us, it's time to get away and recharge. Many universities are now in their first half-year examination periods, or midyear student holidays.

I know the last newsletter only recently dropped, but I am heading overseas shortly to take advantage of the northern hemisphere summer in the United Kingdom for the next 5 weeks. One of the joys of retiring from the sector after 35 years, is the pleasure of enjoying the many aspects of this wonderful world we live in. As a sporting fanatic, I am looking forward to my English cricket summer.

Therefore, due to my overseas travel, the next newsletter will be out in mid to late August.

Finally, I would like to wish my friend and former colleague, Chandrama Acharya (Macquarie University), all the very best for her new role outside of the university sector. Many people inside the sector will miss Chandrama's contributions over the last 17 years. I wish her well.

Andrew Bradshaw
Editor, The Institutional Researcher

AAIR NEWS



Could this be you?

AAIR is seeking to appoint an Executive Committee member. The position is classed as an ordinary member of the committee, though rest assured, we don't think you're ordinary!

Are you looking for a little something extra to add another string to your bow? Show off your skills, learn some new ones, while also helping your Association.

This is a fantastic professional development opportunity to increase your knowledge of the sector and gain an in depth understanding of higher education issues at the international and domestic levels.

This is great opportunity for you to advance your own professional development and become more involved in your Association.

Expressions of Interest

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

[Accord agenda for regional universities.](#) Regional education commissioner, former Nats senator and federal minister, Fiona Nash has just filed her first report. It includes a 'consideration' on regional, rural and remote issues the O'Kane Accord should address, including; * whether policies and funding settings, enable regional universities 'to meet the skills needs of regional communities,'

notably in teaching and healthcare;
* more Commonwealth Supported Places for the Murray Darling (med school) Network;
* 'explore' expanding the Regional University Centre programme;
* a 'recognition' of the importance of student support, and encouraging universities to undertake 'good practice'. There's a fair chance Professor O'Kane and colleagues will be aware of these—Ms Nash is a member of the panel. (CMM – 1 May)

[Research investment already invested.](#) The Department of Industry, Science and Resources announced Friday the Commonwealth, 'will invest \$13bn in science, research and innovation,' this financial year. Good-o, although it was hardly new news, what with there are only being 8 weeks left. And not all the funding impresses. Like the \$3.2bn for the Research and Development Tax Incentive which includes money many in the research policy community think could be better spent on research investors fund from university labs,' a learned reader remark. (CMM 1 May)

[Uni Newcastle makes new 'competitive' pay offer.](#) Uni Newcastle has upped its enterprise bargaining pay offer to 13 per cent – an improvement to the 9.5 per cent staff decisively knocked back in a December vote. Management says the 'increase over the life of the agreement is competitive with the Australian university sector and in line with the University's financial position.' Up to a point. Uni Sydney's offer is 15 per cent and UoN always has trouble convincing staff that money is tight. (CMM – 1 May)

[NSW VCC's big idea for funding new sorts of study.](#) The NSW VC's committee submission to the O'Kane Accord ranges from the immediate to the epochal. The committee states it is focused 'on tangible and realistic proposals to address key Accord questions' that can be addressed in the '24 budget cycle but align with possible structural change.' Which makes a change from the grabathons that make up many submissions. (1 CMM)

[Another campaign for Any University.](#) Edith Cowan U has a new student recruitment campaign, 'creative thinkers made here'. Apparently, 'creative thinkers are not born, they are made, because you need to push beyond theory to mix innovation with imagination.' The 60 second brand statement goes on to specify research at ECU that presumably takes both. 'When we work together to



question, challenge and imagine the most creative thing you make is you,' is the message. (CMM – 2 May)

No muss, no fuss at Flinders University.

The university and National Tertiary Education Union settle on a new enterprise agreement. The discretely negotiated proposal will now go to the union's members for approval and if they sign-off, to an all-staff vote. 'We jointly thank staff and union delegates for their collaborative approach to the bargaining process which has enabled an outcome to be achieved in a timely manner, VC Colin Stirling and NTEU SA secretary Andrew Miller said in a joint statement yesterday. (CMM – 2 May)

Deakin U staff knock management back.

After university and union agreed negotiations stalled the university put an offer direct to staff – and nearly two-thirds of those who turned out voted no. This is a substantial win for the National Tertiary Education Union, the 62 per cent no vote would make management putting another offer without union support a big ask. The university is not releasing how many staff voted, which may mean there was a big turn-out. (CMM – 2 May)

Bargaining at Uni Melbourne: views from the law school.

100 plus present and retired staff let the VC know what they really think. Management's response to union bargaining claims, 'reflect a failure to address the crisis of working conditions at the university and its accompanying crisis of trust in senior management,' they write in an open letter to VC Duncan Maskell, Provost Nicola Phillips and DVC Pip Nicholson. (CMM – 3 May)

A good deal of cooperation: Uni Adelaide and unions strike a bargain.

It follows the basis of an agreement at Flinders U, yesterday. Uni Adelaide reports the terms for a proposed enterprise agreement, backed by management and campus unions. The headline pay rise is 13.2 per cent, compounding to 13.9 per cent, across July '22-'25. (A 2 per cent administrative increase was paid last year). (CMM 3 May)

Vic unis' 2022: the pandemic powered-down but the financial pain remained.

Public universities annual report are tabled in state parliament. Deakin U: reports \$1.18bn in operating income for '22, down from \$1.27bn the previous year (revised from the 21 annual report due to accounting change). There was a net deficit of \$77.8m in '22, compared to a net surplus of \$79.7m in '21. (CMM – 3 May)

On-line underwhelms at RMIT. Training last year wasn't terrific either. In a note on the 2022 annual report CFO Clare Lezaja tells staff, RMIT Online revenue was down 14 per cent last year, 'reflecting lower enrolments in postgraduate education caused by historically low unemployment rates.' Last year's loss was \$6.3m, compared to a \$2.6m loss in '21. The '22 result was 'partially mitigated' by reduced commissions to industry partners and 'lower tutoring requirements.' (CMM – 4 May)

TEQSA sees changes coming. The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency suggests to the O'Kane Accord how HE will change over the next ten years. It predicts:

- * 'much of the growth' is likely to be in the private sector;
- * more dual-sector providers, 'as current vocational education providers seek to expand the breadth of their course offerings to retain a pipeline of students throughout the education lifecycle';
- * 'community expectations of pathways of learning that are industry driven and can build to, and follow on from, traditional degrees' (CMM 4 May)

Another chance to make the case for Uni Tas.

The Tasmanian Legislative Council inquiry into pretty much everything about the state's university is back. It heard evidence from Launceston Chamber of Commerce's William Cassidy on Monday and today Uni Tasmania management are back – Chancellor Alison Watkins, VC Rufus Black, Academic Senate Chair Natalie Brown and Chief People Officer Kristen Derbyshire. (CMM – 4 May)

SA unions and unis do it their (much the same) ways.

All three public unis have new enterprise agreements in the offing – it's a pointer to the new industrial environment. Flinders U and Uni Adelaide announced in-principle agreements with union negotiators this week, they still have to be approved by members and then in all staff ballots but they look like done-deals (CMM May 2 and 3). And Uni SA was a week ahead of both (news to CMM) with a similar agreement, including a 14 per cent life of agreement pay rise, 50 continuing jobs for now casual academic staff by end '25, 'enhanced' workload management provisions and gender affirmation and domestic violence leave. (CMM – 4 May)

Southern Cross U to make good staff underpayments.

Management commissioned an independent review after 'media reporting of some instances of mis-payments at other Australian

universities'. This might refer to Uni Melbourne where there were cases of staff being underpaid \$10m and \$22m (CMM November 3 2022) or Uni Sydney, \$12.75m (CMM September 14). At SCU the review looked for 'anomalies in payments, salaries or entitlements' over 2016-22 and found 718 people were underpaid a total \$950 000. (CMM – 4 May)

Wages and conditions agreed at Griffith Uni.

In December academic staff voted no to the university's offer on wages and conditions – so it was back to bargaining. Yesterday a deal was done, with proposed changes also applying where relevant to professional staff, who voted for the original offer, in December (CMM December 9 and 14). VC Carolyn Evans and National Tertiary Education Union branch president Kim Walder announced an 'excellent outcome' late yesterday. (CMM – 4 May)

More pay to stop the PhD student slide.

Most candidates are in their mid 30s, 'many raising and supporting families,' Universities Australia chief Catriona Jackson warns in a speech this morning. 'And right now these students are studying on less than the minimum wage, she states in the text of her address to the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association. She adds that because PhD candidates are considered students not staff, women among them do not qualify for government parental leave. (CMM – 5 May)

Ian Chubb calls for doing the most needed science with what we've got.

The former chief scientist welcomes the government's 'long overdue revision of national science and research priorities'. 'We should bear in mind those identified in 2015 had little impact, apart from a tick-a-box on some forms. This was not helped by the rapid rotation of science ministers,' Professor Chubb says – and he should know. As chief scientist he led the development process. Now policy secretary for the Australian Academy of Science, Professor Chubb nominates three areas, 'as the basis of our national research effort,'

- * Australia's environment and biodiversity;
- * 'matters that are global ... where we have the capacity and talent to contribute to international efforts.' He nominates health, energy and global warming. (CMM 5 May)

Academic integrity awareness is up, for now. Students who are aware of cheating going on is way down – that might



change. Studiosity's latest student survey puts awareness of cheating going on at 15 per cent, half the figure for 2020. The study support service (and CMM advertiser) reports 25 per cent awareness in medicine down to 14 per cent in nursing. Big majorities of students also report knowing how to avoid plagiarism and the consequences of not. (CMM – 5 May)

[New VC for Uni New England.](#) Chris Moran will take over in 'the coming months' Chancellor James Harris announced the appointment Friday. Professor Moran will move from DVC R at Curtin U. He picks up a chalice that may not be entirely poisoned. The university community and council are deeply divided, with criticism of Mr Harris and council over backing previous vice chancellor Bridget Heywood's university restructure. (CMM – 8 May)

['Quick, bounce! it's ASQA squad!'](#) While the people the message is meant for probably won't pay attention – ASQA reminds the regulated of their responsibilities in international education. In particular, 'not provide false or misleading information or guarantee a migration outcome in any marketing activities.' (CMM – 8 May)

[Career-starts from the ARC.](#) The Australian Research Council announces 50 Early Career Industry Fellowships. The fellowships are 'for new and emerging researchers to work with highly experienced, leading professors and shoulder-to-shoulder with Australian industry to help solve industry challenges.' As such they appear a starter version of the MCR fellowships, announced last month (CMM April 26). What is different is the success rate – 8 per cent for the MCRs and 13.9 per cent for the early career awards. The overall success rate for the ARC's Discovery Programme last year was 20 per cent. (CMM – 8 May)

[Research integrity advisers: obscure, ignored.](#) There are research integrity advisers who did not know they were in the job until Adrian Barnett and colleagues* got in touch. Which was not always easy; 'There were multiple institutions where we found it difficult to find anything about research integrity and other institutions where the contact about research integrity was a generic email or generic on-line form. One of our emails was blocked by a security control and other emails were likely ignored or filtered as spam,' they report. (CMM – 8 May)

[Deep dives: unis here to help.](#) Innovation is included in the UK free trade treaty, which kicks-in at month's end. The Group of Eight says it and UK peer Russell Group are on it. The agreement nominates emerging and transformative technologies, including clean and low emissions technologies, artificial intelligence, and other digital technologies and establishes a Strategic Innovation Dialogue to commence within 12 months. (CMM – 8 May)

[Advanced manufacturing: the next big research thing that wasn't.](#) In 2015 the previous government made 'advanced manufacturing' a research priority. The results are 'startling,' just not in a good way Tim Cahill and Andreea Papuc Krischer (Research Strategies Australia) report by overall publication count Uni Queensland is well first (3047), followed by RMIT (2097), UNSW (2035), Uni Sydney (1929) and Uni Melbourne (1735). (CMM – 9 May)

[Industry collaboration from cradle to gravitas.](#) The third set of Australian Research Council industry fellowships are announced. The ARC's intent is, 'high quality and impactful collaborations between university and industry personnel.' The new laureate fellowships, for senior researchers, are rare – with just eight awards, for a 7 per cent success rate. This is in-line with the mid-career awards (8 per cent), but way worse than the early career category, nearly 14 per cent (CMM April 26, May 8). (CMM – 9 May)

[One qualification system to rule them all.](#) A new AQF could do it. The O'Kane Accord's discussion paper refers to 'harmonising' VET and HE and the 'need for a non-hierarchical and flexibly applied qualifications framework that encourages recognition of credit and prior learning,' Sally Kift points out in her O'Kane submission that there's a way to do that, set out in the Noonan Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework. (CMM – 9 May)

[Lloyd to lead at Universities Australia.](#) David Lloyd (Uni SA) is the next chair of Universities Australia. He will replace John Dewar (La Trobe U). Professor Lloyd is now a deputy chair, with QUT VC Margaret Sheil, who intends to stay on. As does board member Attila Brungs (UNSW). Steve Chapman (Edith Cowan U) is in mid-term and continues. Board nominees are, Carolyn Evans, (Griffith U), Renée Leon Charles Sturt U), Pascale Quester (Swinburne U) and Adam Shoemaker (Victoria U). (CMM – 9 May)

[Budget message: hold on Accord's coming.](#) The Treasurer did not mention universities in his address and Treasury dealt with the sector in one par. 'The Australian Universities Accord is an extensive review of the higher education system which will provide recommendations and performance targets to improve the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of higher education.' There's a bit more of the same for VET, \$3.7bn over five years for more free TAFE and VET places to be fee-free, with a new five year national skills agreement from January. (CMM 10 May)

[TEQSA tells what it's coming for.](#) Two years after lockdowns launched on-line courses the regulator announces they are its compliance intent for '23. 'Our focus will be on determining whether providers are maintaining the quality of education and learning outcomes in on-line delivery, and the adequacy of accompanying governance arrangements, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency CEO Alistair Maclean announces. (CMM – 10 May)

[Peak pragmatism in Budget response.](#) With the Accord to come lobbies worked with what they didn't get last night. The Group of Eight, stated, the Budget has 'focused on relieving cost-of-living pressure as it should ... The Go8 will work closely with the government to ensure we have the skilled workforce and world class researchers the nation needs to meet our national priorities and protect our national security,' chief executive Vicki Thomson said. (CMM – 10 May)

[What TEQSA found in '22.](#) The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency reports what it was up to last year. TEQSA investigated 302 concerns about 88 HE providers (45 per cent of them). Students were the source of 59 per cent and 'internal referrals' 9 per cent. Student services were the largest categories of concern where an institution was named, teaching and courses (24 per cent), learning environment (17 per cent) and admissions (11 per cent). (CMM – 10 May)

[Found in the Budget weeds.](#) There's bad news for unis that students don't rate. Budget papers present increases ahead of inflation across the forward estimates for the excellent Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching. \$7.281m this financial year will be \$8.133m next. Micro marketplace will shut up shop. The previous government's National Microcredentials Marketplace has funding



doubled next financial year, to \$1m – and then it disappears. The HE and off-shore microcredential pilots, kick on, as promised. (CMM – 11 May)

One way for a better VET. VETeran Robin Shreeve's submission to the Reps inquiry into perceptions and status of VET was the first published (CMM February 10) – it must have made an impact because the committee asked him to give appear in-person. Which he did last week – suggesting a solution to VET's image issues, as brief as it all-encompassing. (CMM – 11 May)

Budget announced so back to business. The usual focus on research funding resumes. The Group of Eight was approving of the Budget Tuesday night, saying it, 'focused on relieving cost-of-living pressure as it should.' Which was wise – when the government is announcing help for ordinary Australians, demands for more money for universities was not a message that would sell. But it was back to business yesterday from the Go8's Vicki Thomson. (CMM – 11 May)

From the data refinery. The estimable National Centre for Vocational Education Research proposes ways to do more with different sets. Combining Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth and Naplan data can indicate relationships between academic ability and education and employment outcomes. But you have to know how to link the two sets. (CMM – 11 May)

Who knows about research integrity. The House of Commons' Science, Innovation and Tech Committee has a new report, on 'reproducibility and research integrity'. The committee finds, 'there have been increasing concerns raised that the integrity of some scientific research is questionable because of failures to be able to reproduce the claimed findings of some experiments or analyses of data and therefore confirm that the original researcher's conclusions were justified'. (CMM – 11 May)

Accord needs a recipe for a bigger research costs pie. Nicholas Fisk and Daniel Owens (UNSW) argue the Research Block Grant pie is not big enough to feed established research schemes, let alone the MRFF and commercialisation programmes. Cooking up a solution is up to the Accord. In Features this morning they warn that the shortfall in funding for what research grants don't cover (14c on the dollar) is only some of the extra cash unis must find to keep the lab lights on. There's also the gap between what projects cost and what

research grants fund, plus salary shortfalls. (CMM – 12 May)

UTS underpaid people for years and owed them millions. The university did not act on its own enterprise agreements and owed 2777 staff \$4.4m. The Fair Work Ombudsman reports the university failed to pay casual professional staff for the minimum three hours per engagement, as EAs require. The three-hours requirement was introduced in the 2014 agreement. The problem occurred because UTS did not update systems. (CMM – 12 May)

Answer the question before its next asked. In Reps Question Time yesterday, Independent member for Fowler, Dai Le asked the Treasurer about indexation of students' loans 'on top of their already exorbitant HECS debt'. 'Young people are our future and deserve fair and equitable access to education,' she said, asking Dr Chalmers, 'what will the government do to ease their debt pressure with your budget surplus?' (CMM – 12 May)

Uni Sydney's not as bad as it looks financial fall. It's 2022 underlying operating surplus was \$298m – 'significantly down' on 2021. The university's headline operating result for '21 was \$1.04bn, but that included a bunch of one-offs, land sales, pandemic-emergency Commonwealth research funding, booming investments. On management's preferred measure, the university's underlying margin, last year's \$381m compared to \$453m in '21. This is not too terrible, compared to Uni Melbourne's operating deficit of \$104m last year. (CMM – 12 May)

Asking researchers how to measure their performance. Chief Scientist Cathy Foley will advise the government 'on the future of assessment practices in Australia's research system'. Dr Foley's office has commissioned the Australian Council of Learned Academies and the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia to ask researchers, in part via a survey, HERE. The intent is to identify measures of research assessment that;

- * recognise 'mentorship, outreach, team science, innovation commercialisation';
- * 'support 'a diverse research workforce';
- * recognise 'research quality and research excellence, while supporting research integrity';
- * provide 'the right incentives for researchers and institutions to engage in high quality research, development and innovation'. (CMM – 12 May)

The precariat has had it with poverty. There's a petition to the House of Reps for a \$10 000 increase in Commonwealth PhD

scholarships, to match the \$39 000 minimum wage. ' PhD students contribute enormously to Australia's research every year, with their time accounting for 56 per cent the total research output. ... We believe the government should support higher education and ensure a competitive standing for Australia,' petitioners state. (CMM – 15 May)

Uni Wollongong good to go in India. With a tick from Prime Minister Modi, no less. The university can establish it's long-planned 'teaching location' in custom-created financial hub Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, following Mr Modi signing off, in a Friday meeting with UoW VC Patricia Davidson. It follows Deakin U which was approved in March to set up there – to be the first international university with its own campus in India (CMM March 9). (CMM – 15 May)

What the WA uni review is costing. The price of the inquiry into merging the state's public universities is in the WA budget papers – \$400 000 this financial year and \$289 000 next. Sandra Harding (ex JCU VC), Peter Shergold (ex head, PM&C and recently departed Western Sydney U chancellor), Ian Watt (also former head, PM&C) and John Williams (Uni Adelaide) are doing the reviewing. WA appears to be a getting a good deal. The SA state government's 2022 budget allocated \$1m for a commission to advise on a universities merger (although it does not look like being needed – with Uni Adelaide and Uni SA working on terms.) (CMM – 15 May)

Need to know on understanding open access. Green and grey OA look the same? COKI can help. The naming convention for open access is to use colours, gems and metals, with no standard distinguishing descriptors – which makes it hard to distinguish the charges that will make publisher an obscene amount of money from those where the sum is just vulgar. Which is where the excellent Curtin U Open Knowledge Initiative comes in and comes in again. (CMM – 15 May)

PM goes the big Ben, again. Mr Albanese opened a high-tech factory Friday where the written text of his speech includes, 'one of the things we learned from the pandemic is that if we're at the end of supply chains, we're vulnerable for global shocks that we don't see coming'. It was a lesson learned first in WWII, when a shortage of motor vehicles and parts, led to PM Ben Chifley driving the first locally manufactured Holden off the assembly



line. A point the PM likes to make. (15 – May)

Uni Queensland's lime of defence. Australia could be saved from citrus disease ravaging the US and Africa by genes in local limes. There are five that are resistant to 'citrus greening,' and Uni Queensland researchers have sequenced the genome of local hero, the Gympie Lime, with others to follow. The idea is to identify a gene that protects them as an alternative to using chemicals to protect commercial crops. (CMM – 15 May)

Alternative to the Adelaide universities merger. 'The best universities in the world tend not to be large sausage factories'. Neil Weste (Uni Adelaide) has created a manifesto in the form of a petition against the in-planning proposal to combine Uni Adelaide and Uni SA. Geoff Hanmer (Uni Adelaide adjunct) makes much the same case. Professor Weste suggests 24 reasons not to make them merge, including:

- * cost, leading to financial instability
- * loss of 'local control and less competition'
- * disrupted academic programmes
- * 'negative' impact on research
- * impact 'on community partnerships'

'to treat universities as if they were corporate entities, forming corporate style mergers and acquisitions, without regard to the community they serve runs against university ethos,' he argues. (CMM – 16 May)

Securing essential skills. The SA Government is talking to Flinders U and Uni SA, 'to support a pipeline of social workers coming into the child and family support system'. It's part of the response to the Hyde and Alexander reviews of the state's child protection system. (CMM – 17 May)

Electrician training shocker. Trainers are qualifying people as electricians on the basis of photos and videos of their 'performing various electrical related activities' – this is supposed to demonstrate recognised prior learning. VET system watchers warn brokers for registered training organisations in NSW are pitching trade qualifications 'with no study, in a matter of weeks.' (CMM – 17 May)

Merger choice for Uni SA. Uni Adelaide – Uni SA-merge or no recommendations are imminent. David Lloyd sets the context according to 'Avengers: Infinity War.' His colleagues would have expected nothing else. Uni SA's VC tells staff they are all approaching 'a branch-point in Uni SA's timeline.' One branch takes the

university along its present path, same size, same successes for students, generating \$22m pa in good years to invest in teaching, research and engagement. (CMM – 15 May)

International students keep coming. March arrivals were more than twice 2022. The Bureau of Stats reports 56 000 graced our shores, compared to 25 000 last year, still down 25 per cent on the last pre-Covid March, in 2019. Which Catriona Jackson from Universities Australia considers good news. 'These students are assets to our nation. They bring new knowledge, skills and perspectives, making Australia and our region stronger, smarter and better connected.' (CMM – 17 May)

Uni of Tas: what's in it for the locals. 'As the only university in the state, I recognise that there are strong feelings of community ownership of Uni Tasmania,' state education minister Roger Jaensch told the Legislative Council inquiry into the U Tas Act. He got that bit right. Mr Jaensch added that while the government will consider the inquiry's outcomes 'very carefully' any action should wait on the O'Kane Accord, which is covering 'many of the topics' raised. (CMM – 17 May)

New response to yesterday's threat. TEQSA has blocked 100 academic cheating sites, using 'protocols' it has in place with ISPs. Good-o, but as CMM suggested last week, with GPT4 updating daily, this is rather like banning crossbows as Death Stars become open access. Not that the agency wasn't aware of what has arrived. A year back Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency Chief Commissioner Peter Coaldrake warned text-generating tools were emerging (CMM March 14 2022). (CMM – 18 May)

ARC completes national defence against foreign interference in research. Australian Research Council's Internal Audit finds it is doing ok on security risks but can do more – it will. In March '22 the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security's report on foreign interference at universities recommended an audit of sampled ARC research grants 'to determine exposure' to 'talent recruitment programmes' of foreign powers (CMM March 28 2022). (CMM – 18 May)

Budget criticism correct: Aus under-performing on research spend by GDP. Robyn Pryor of the Parliamentary Library sets out the spin-free spends in the Budget. The big picture: the last all-sector GERD (gross expenditure on R&D) figure dates from 2019-20 when it was 1.79 per

cent of GDP. The OECD average then was 2.6 per cent. An Aus update is due in August.

The Fed spend: \$12.1bn in '22-23 – up 3.2 per cent on the previous year but 0.49 per cent of GDP, way lower than the 0.6 per cent average since figures were first kept recorded in 1978-'79. However, there is an additional \$1bn for science, research and innovation, largely in the Industry and Science portfolio. (CMM – 18 May)

New script for GP study. Uni Sydney establishes a new clinical school, 'to enhance general practice as a preferred career choice'. Which is well-timed indeed. Health Minister Mark Butler warns 14 per cent of medical graduates become GPs. 'Ten years down the track, if we don't turn that around, we will be in all sorts of difficulty,' he says. The new college, 'is on par with the university's hospital-based clinical schools spread throughout metropolitan and rural NSW.' (CMM – 18 May)

Damages done by degree inflation and what to do about them. 'Australian universities demean and debase themselves by defining their purpose as issuing employment credentials for employers. They are much more important than that,' Steven Schwartz argues in a new paper for the Centre for Independent Studies. The thrice VC (Brunel U, Macquarie U and Murdoch U) argues that the growth of graduate numbers allows employers to require degrees for jobs that do not require them. An end to 'degree inflation,' he argues, would be beneficial; by opening more jobs to more people and increasing the value of other education and training. (CMM – 18 May)

Indexation pain for students (for some it could have been way worse). The government announces student debt repayment thresholds for '23. The minimum income increases from \$48 000 to \$51 000, where the repayment is 1 per cent, it tops out at 10 per cent for incomes over \$151 000. The indexation rate is 7 per cent this year – less a hike than a long march from 0.6 per cent in '21. For some the news could have been way worse. The Department of Education ethereally announces (detail wise) that it has identified 'a small proportion' of past and present HE students whose loan records 'were not properly transferred' to their Australian Taxation Office accounts. (CMM – 19 May)



[Buckets of money from the Medical Research Future Fund.](#) Since it got going in 2016–2017 the MRFF has made \$1.9bn in grants. And that's not money nicked from another agency – it's an extraordinary additional investment in the nation's health, as set out in the Fund's new report for 2022-'23. It's also been a boon to universities, which account for 85 per cent of grants where payments were made in 2020-22. (CMM – 19 May)

[A way to build Brand Australia.](#) Austrade's spend on marketing education offshore tops out at \$8m – including staff costs. Which did not strike some at a hearing of the joint parliamentary committee inquiring into international education and tourism as a bunch to build 'Brand Australia.' So where could more national brand bucks come from? 'Government is not going to go and borrow tens of millions of dollars more and put it on the national debt for a sector where the providers get tens of billions of dollars of revenue,' committee member Julian Hill (Labor-Vic) said. (CMM – 19 May)

[Union piles on the pressure at Uni Melbourne.](#) Jane Hansen was scheduled to be installed as the university's new chancellor Wednesday afternoon. According to the National Tertiary Education Union, Ms Hansen is 'a well-known and respected member of the Uni Melbourne community.' And so the comrades call on her to, 'bring a fresh perspective to university leadership – one that recognises the invaluable contribution staff make to the community and supports staff to do their best by listening to them during the bargaining process.' (CMM – 22 May)

[UNSW puts a pay rise on the table.](#) Management proposes 16 per cent in four instalments, from signing through to July 2026. 'We believe this to be a competitive offer, reflecting the value we place on all our staff while also addressing the ongoing cost of living pressures,' HR chief Deena Amorelli told staff Friday. Close to the competition, if that happens to be neighbouring Uni Sydney, which is offer 16.1 per cent (flat) over the same period, plus \$2000 on signing. (CMM – 22 May)

[Charles Darwin U wants trainee doctors in its house.](#) CDU is going flat out to the finish of the race for new places in med schools. There are said to be 80 up for allocation by the Commonwealth and CDU wants 40 of them for its proposed medicine course. Foundation dean of medicine Diane Stephens was in the NT News Friday making the case to an

audience that is surely already convinced. (CMM – 22 May)

[A bargaining win for Uni Newcastle.](#) DVC Kent Anderson tells staff that members of the Community and Public Sector Union have agreed on terms with management for a new professional staff enterprise agreement. But a meeting of the larger and way more militant National Tertiary Education Union, which represents professional and academic staff rejected management. (CMM – 22 May)

[Life or death research stats.](#) Clinical prediction models support medical decision-making – which patients get what treatment – it's a problem when the data is doubtful. Adrian Barnett (QUT) and colleagues* analysed research paper abstracts to find statistical evidence of 'hacking,' researchers fudging data to get a better 'area under curve' statistic, which refers to risk probability. (CMM – 23 May)

[Med research grants: what not do with AI.](#) The National Health and Medical Research Council is working on an AI policy for funding – for now it has don'ts not do's. As ever with the NHMRC, issues are thought through and implications addressed.

'take caution' with applications: 'it may not be possible to monitor or manage subsequent use of information entered into generative AI databases';

peer reviewers: 'must not use generative AI tools to assist them in the assessment of grant applications as this would be a breach of their confidentiality undertaking';

updates to come: 'as technologies develop and our understanding of risks and benefits is deepened.' (CMM 23 May)

[Taking the pulse of STEM.](#) Science, technology, engineering and maths are great, although nobody has asked how the people doing them feel. So huzza for Science and Technology Australia which is surveying the STEM workforce, asking people about what they do, how they got into the biz and how it's going for them.

It's a first take of the pulse of the STEM sector, says STA's Misha Schubert and needed, 'to inform how policy settings shape careers.' (CMM – 23 May)

[Who collects from the MRFF.](#) The NMHRC has long had an old bloke problem – they win lots of grants – so what's happening at the Medical Research Future Fund? The Fund's 2021-22 report reveals a paunch of chief investigators who are on the far-side

of 50. Some 869 (38 per cent) chief investigators over 50-59 won grants, so did 438 of the 60-69 year olds (35.6 per cent) and 58 of the 70 plus CIs (30.4 per cent). (CMM – 23 May)

[What the Accord is all about.](#) In Reps QT yesterday Andrew Wilkie (Ind-Tas) asked Education Minister Jason Clare if he will freeze HELP indexation until the Accord report is delivered in December. To which Mr Clare replied, 'the short answer to your question is no, we have made no change to HECs in the budget.' The long answer was that Mr Clare wants to expand access to HE. 'This is what we've got to fix. The cost of university degrees is important, and the cost of living is important, but the cost of those kids from those communities missing out is important too. This is what we've got to fix. This, at its core, is what the Universities Accord will be all about.' (CMM – 24 May)

[Hooray for HELP.](#) The Higher Education Loan Programme is not the bogeyman it is currently being made out to be – it must be defended and preserved. In stark contrast to the shock and awe commentary, the reality is it is actually a genius Australian invention which has provided affordable access to university for generations of Australians. For me, it's as important as other iconic, societal changing Australian innovations, including the secret ballot, black box flight recorder and Wi-Fi. (CMM – 24 May)

[ARC slow and no to FOI.](#) Back in 2018 Monash U economist Christis Tombazos asked the Australian Research Council for details of Discovery programme applications in economics. The Council said no. The matter ended up before the Australian Information Commissioner, which reports the ARC rejected two requests on two grounds, personal privacy and the documents asked for did not exist – although nearly a year later it advised that there were in fact such documents. But by 2021 the council was still stating it did not have to supply most of the information. (CMM – 24 May)

[Connecting VET and HE: credit transfer is a challenge by Claire Field.](#) The higher education sector does not have confidence that VET providers deliver uniformly high quality courses. At the Skills Ministers meeting in Darwin on Friday, Mary O'Kane shared the 'key themes identified in (Accord) consultations to date and explored opportunities with ministers to support greater alignment between the VET and higher education systems.' Skills Ministers then discussed how the



National Skills Agreement could introduce reforms to 'serve a more cohesive and connected tertiary sector'. (CMM 24 May)

Why more men get grants. Researchers wanted to know the gender split on research funding so they looked at who got 50 000 ARC and NHMRC awards. They found less total grants for women, especially at senior-career levels – in part because there were 16,799 fewer women than men in the research workforce (averaged for 2014-17). (CMM – 24 May)

Uni Newcastle appeals to the umpire. VC Alex Zelinsky tells staff management has asked the Fair Work Commission for help to reach a bargaining deal. There's an agreement ready to be put to professional staff, with the support of the Community and Public Sector Union, but members of the National Tertiary Education Union knocked back an offer for all academics. (CMM – 25 May)

Uni merger could increase pay in SA. A plan to merge (or not) the universities of Adelaide and South Australia is due from them next month – the pro case is picking up. The Advertiser newspaper reported yesterday that the state's Productivity Commission chair Adrian Tembel thinks the 8 per cent 'wage gap' between SA and the national average 'can be eased' by the merger. Apparently, the finding is in a 'major report' handed to the premier. That may well be the Commission's report on 'turning research into economic competitiveness.' (CMM – 25 May)

WA unis ok financial shape. But if the inquiry considering a WA public universities merger is looking for a reason it could point to Murdoch Uni. Uni financials maven Frank Larkins (Uni Melbourne) reports all four had 2022 income down on '21 – but that was largely due to one-offs that year, Commonwealth COVID emergency money and respective shares of the university-system selling international student recruiter, IDP Education. Plus international students did not return in strength in '22. (CMM – 25 May)

Clare unhappy as ever on teacher ed. Morning deans, think the scathing assessment of initial teacher education courses by Mark Scott and colleagues was as bad as things? Fraid not. 'If you ask most teachers, they'll tell you that when they first became a teacher, they didn't feel prepared for the classroom. That the prac they got when they were at uni wasn't up to scratch,' Education Minister Jason Clare told Patricia Karvelas on RN yesterday. (CMM – 26 May)

Union nets UNSW offer. Last week management made what it called a 'competitive' 16 per cent pay offer – close to that at local frenemy – Uni Sydney. But overall not good enough. National Tertiary Education Union General Secretary Damian Cahill told CMM, UNSW 'falls short of pay rises at other universities across Sydney. UNSW is a wealthy, top tier university and can afford to pay more to its hard working staff in the midst of the most severe cost of living crisis in a generation.' (CMM – 26 May)

Greens see red over Uni Tas city development – 'just looks a bit cheap'. And that's just for starters. Party leader Cassy O'Connor goes on to call on the university to 'reflect' on popular opposition to its move to the Hobart CBD. In a speech in parliament Ms O'Connor called on the university to 'press pause' given 'deep resistance to the move' among staff, students and the Hobart community. Plus, 'there is a concern about diminishing quality of learning at UTAS. It would be wonderful if they just press pause and had a deeper conversation with those affected communities,' she said. (CMM – 26 May)

Pay rises on the way at Uni Queensland. The university offers staff pay rises of 15.76 per cent to 17.74 per cent (the difference is the relative impact of a \$1500 signing bonus). There is also a commitment to casual academic staff being offered continuing employment and academic freedom protections. These are good results for the union bargaining team and while National Tertiary Education Union members are not abandoning scheduled industrial action just yet word is they will once a union-university heads of agreement is in-place. (CMM – 29 May)

Uni Newcastle union to management: negotiate not arbitrate. Uni Newcastle VC Alex Zelinsky hopes the Fair Work Commission can settle a deal between university and the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education. He told staff last week that a meeting with the FWC is scheduled for tomorrow (CMM May 25, 26). But as of Friday his hope was forlorn, with NTEU members voting for the VC to withdraw his application to the commission. (CMM – 29 May)

Flinders U's very own AUKUS. Adelaide is variously agog or appalled at the prospect of its two CBD-fringe unis merging – but Flinders isn't looking local. What may be about to become the state's sole stand-alone public university has its own Aukus. VC Colin Stirling signed a partnership

Friday with Uni Rhode Island president Marc Parlange (yes, the former Monash U provost). (CMM – 29 May)

Rooms of their own for more Uni Q students. The idea is to 'at least' double its existing 740 beds, (plus residential colleges) thus reducing pressure on rentals in surrounding St Lucia. Design options are for three buildings of five-nine stories, across the road from the 610 bed Kev Carmody House, that opened last year. The university says it will be 'consulting' with Brisbane City Council – which is wise. (CMM – 29 May)

Too-easy VET quals. Bodgy international education agents aren't the only problem in student recruitment. Voced insiders warn that agents are selling the idea of quick qualifications in the local market ('qualify in a month'), based on very liberal ideas of what counts as recognised prior learning. Agents says proof of skill can be photos and videos of aspiring tradespeople doing tasks (CMM May 17). The sell from 'education support service providers' is certificates and diplomas without classroom study via RPL, in traditional trades, plumbing, electrical, carpentry, cookery. Presumably going where the money is, one offers 'NDIS Individual care'. (CMM – 29 May)

Uni mergers without McGowan. The WA premier is leaving – which means what for the inquiry he commissioned into merging the state's public universities? CMM has no clue what either of his suggested replacements think, Deputy Premier Roger Cook and Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson. Although, Mr Cook made positive noises about uni-government cooperation at UWA in December. No matter, Chief Scientist Peter Klinken may mention the benefits of a merger when he meets the new premier. (CMM November 16 2021). (CMM – 30 May)

ID outage. The Office of the Unique Student Identifier (all 14m of them) issued an 'outage alert' yesterday. It reported 'issues with our Contact Centre' at 2pm, with no update by CMM deadline. So was it hacked? CMM asked by email but received no reply. However, USI states it does not hold documents used to create a USI and information is only released with an ID holder's permission. (CMM – 30 May)

Feds respond to risks caused by international agents. Officials were investigating updating the education services for overseas students legislation – now the scope is way wider. The Department of Education is asking the



international ed sector how, 'to remain internationally competitive and provide a quality student experience.' To bring up to speed providers focused on building their business on Mars, the DoE spells what the industry wants addressed, unscrupulous practices associated with education agents ... if unchecked, this behaviour could damage students and providers and threaten Australia's reputation. (CMM – 30 May)

[Jobs figures a case for quals.](#) 90 per cent plus of employment growth is in occupations that 'typically' require post-school qualifications. Which led to a media statement from Skills and Training Minister Brendan O'Connor headlined, 'VET key to tackling regional skills shortages.' While Universities Australia announced, 'Unis producing skilled workers the economy needs'. (CMM – 31 May)

[Student recruitment for where students are.](#) Most university campaigns are interchangeable – not Swinburne Online's 'ready for more'. CMM has long-banged on about how most university marketing promotes ideals of learning, teaching and research and how great their institution is – without explaining what's in it for students – as in specific benefits which distinguish the University of X from Y U. But Swinburne Online (a partnership with Online Education Services) has a different campaign running on social media. (CMM – 31 May)

[Driving hard bargaining at Uni Newcastle.](#) Last week VC Alex Zelinsky asked the Fair Work Commission to arbitrate less stalled than fallen into a black hole enterprise bargaining – cue outrage from the National Tertiary Education Union (CMM May 25, 26 and 29). On Friday the union demanded the VC withdraw his application for the commission to arbitrate and keep talking, given 'the parties were close to agreement.' (CMM – 31 May)

[Assessing research if ERA is over: ideas from the ARC review team.](#) 'The sector certainly still needs a trusted assessment mechanism; it just needs a more sophisticated and better targeted one'. Margaret Sheil and colleagues recommend the end of the two research evaluation exercises in their review of the Australian Research Council Act. (CMM – 1 Jun)

[Dilemma for education deans.](#) If they fear their faculties will take the fall for everything that is wrong in schools –they may well be right. Problem is, there may not be much they can do about it. Mary

Ryan (NSW Deans Council and ACU) was out yesterday responding to calls for more in-classroom time for trainee teachers, saying, 'we would wholeheartedly welcome professional service reform.' But she warned, 'the costs to ITE providers in paying university and school-based placement supervisors and improved digital solutions to support professional placements also needed to be addressed.' (CMM – 1 Jun)

[NSW 2022 annual reports](#) – there's Uni Sydney and everybody else. 2022 reports tabled in state parliament were set in circumstances similar to those of other states – revenue down after 2021's not to be repeated COVID-emergency funding from the Feds, strong investments and one-off gains from the previously unis-owned IDP sale. (CMM – 1 Jun)

[Western Sydney world number one in new global development ranking.](#) Times Higher Education rates universities on their contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. WSU is followed by Uni Tasmania (global fifth) and RMIT (seventh) in the all-goals category, which is good, but not as good as Canada – with four world top tens. There are another six Aus institutions in the top 50, UTS (=14), UNSW (=18), Monash U (21), Uni Newcastle (28), Uni Sunshine Coast (=29) and Macquarie University (39). All up Australia has 15 universities in the world top 100. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[Latelab can't come too soon.](#) It will be at Swinburne and no it's not already behind schedule. It's part of plan for the Hawthorn campus, scheduled for '25 – there's a latelab already but the new one will be 20 per cent bigger. The lab is a place for students to study and socialise, with space to eat and cook for themselves and do it all when suits, 24/seven. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[In NSW 2000 uni staff weren't paid all they earned last year.](#) The NSW Auditor General reports that public universities in the state made \$110m in provisions for 'wage remediation' last year – more than double the 2021 figure. And there were new cases, involving 2000 people at six universities. In 2022! Years after problems, particularly in Victoria began to be raised. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[La Trobe U proposes more: pay and working hours both.](#) Plus, there is a cash for super trade-off. Vice Chancellor John Dewar tells staff that after seven months of 'productive negotiations' all enterprise bargaining proposals are discussed. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[Political pain of student debt.](#) The National Tertiary Education Union has crunched the debt numbers to demonstrate how HELP does precisely not that to new graduates' chances of buying a home. The study's worst cases (and they are grand on the gloom) are based on loan indexation and the previous government's thumping increases to student contributions to business and HASS degrees. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[ANU payrise: what's on offer depends on who you ask.](#) The university offers a 'cumulative pay increase' of 16.99 per cent over four years. 'In other words' Chief People Officer Kate Wittenden is at pains to make clear, 'your salary will be almost 17 per cent higher on the first pay day of 2026 than it was in January 2023.' The offer includes the 3.5 per cent paid in February, with four more increases to come through to January '26. Plus there will one off payments of \$1250 and \$1000, depending on pay grade, when the agreement kicks-in. (CMM – 2 Jun)

[VC pay: 'nothing over the top' says minister.](#) Education Minister Jason Clare was asked about VC pay rises while universities are making losses, on Sydney Radio 2GB yesterday. 'They earn a lot of money, a lot more money than I do, or you do. I want to make sure that they're paid a decent wage but nothing over the top,' he replied. Good-o but how pray is he to do that? (CMM - 2 Jun)

[Schools could doom the great Accord challenge.](#) Jason Clare is determined to lift HE participation rates-it might be harder than he hopes. In the Repls last month Education Minister Jason Clare answered a question about the impact of HELP indexation on graduate study debt, responding his focus was expanding university enrolments from disadvantaged groups. 'This is what we've got to fix. The cost of university degrees is important, and the cost of living is important, but the cost of those kids from those communities missing out is important too. This is what we've got to fix. This, at its core, is what the Universities Accord will be all about.' (CMM – 5 Jun)

[Future campus: a new guide to getting there by Tim Winkler.](#) With CMM about to be gone there's a new way to discover what's happening, and needs to, in tertiary education. Future Campus will bring you news, analysis and fresh voices – from the sector, for the sector. Publishing weekly, plus regular updates, it will be a focus for voices that need to be heard more often – Indigenous thought



leaders, young staff who hold the future of the sector in their hands, innovative researchers and teachers, as well as professional staff, who are often overlooked in their contribution to shaping the sector. (CMM – 5 Jun)

[Here they go again at Uni Newcastle.](#) The Fair Work Commission schedules a second week of arbitration between unions and management. Talks last week on terms of a new enterprise agreement (CMM May 31) evidently got nowhere far enough – with FWC Deputy President Saunders convening four more days of meetings this week. (CMM – 5 Jun)

[RMIT ups Vietnam investment.](#) There's \$250m for teaching, research, infrastructure and partnerships. RMIT set up in Vietnam 20 years back and claims to be the first foreign owned university in-country, now teaching 12 000 students at Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and a language centre in Da Nang. The first commitment of the new fund is an industry and innovation research hub in Hanoi, which will also offer 'short-form education solutions and workforce training.' (CMM – 5 Jun)

[Up for grabs: allocating the biggest buckets of medical research money.](#) There's a webinar today on 'improving alignment and coordination' of the two peak agencies. It's for comments on a well thought-through discussion paper on how the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Medical Research Future Fund can better work together in awarding their combined \$1.5bn annual grants. (CMM – 5 Jun)

[A task for TEOSA: call for university councils to step up oversight.](#) The Fair Work Ombudsman says they should – but gosh, how to encourage them to get more involved. In a letter to Accord chief Mary O'Kane, tabled in the Senate's Employment and Workplace Relations Committee, Deputy FWO Rachel Volzke suggests a process. (Thanks to the learned Claire Field for the pointer). Ms Volzke raises the role of university governing bodies and suggests things they could look at. (CMM – 5 Jun)

[Uni Sydney's \\$100m spend on research talent.](#) The university announces the Horizon programme – 40 continuing FT/PT research positions paying \$113 000 to nearly \$160 000 (plus super) and 'up to' \$100 000 per annum in research funding. The five-year fellowships are 80 per cent research for the first three with a 'balanced' teaching and research load for the remainder. (CMM – 6 Jun)

[Back to bargaining at Deakin Uni.](#) While Mrs Walton does not mention it, bargaining with the National Tertiary Education Union was delayed when management put an offer to the university community that the union vehemently opposed and was rejected by 62 per cent of staff voting (CMM May 2). Prior to the vote she warned, 'a 'no' vote means there will be considerable delay before you have an opportunity to engage with any further agreement. There is also no guarantee that a revised agreement would maintain the significant level of proposed uplifts and increases,' (CMM April 28 2023). (CMM – 6 Jun)

[UNSW's 'best estimate' on what it owes underpaid staff.](#) In last week's 2022 University of NSW annual report (pp 93, 94) there is a \$92m provision in the consolidated accounts (\$45m in 2021) which 'includes the university's best estimate of the expenditure required to meet the university's obligations to current and former employees: under the 2018 enterprise agreements. ... The estimate includes provision for a thorough review into historical pay practices and the possible amounts due to current and former staff, including interest, on-cost and other related costs to correct.' (CMM – 7 Jun)

[Bargaining's great in the sunshine state.](#) It took a few blues, sorry maroons, to get there but Griffith U has new enterprise agreements ready to go. A 90 per cent majority of academics voting have just backed a management offer supported by the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union. That just 40 per cent of eligible staff turned out may reflect a desire to end a long and contentious process. Professional staff voted for their own agreement in December, when academics knocked theirs back so the former need to vote again, today and tomorrow. (CMM – 7 Jun)

[A future funder for medical research.](#) Combining admin of National Health and Medical Research Council and Medical Research Future Fund grants will create a kilolitre of cash. And with a new options paper from the feds, it appears that one way or another there will be a single allocation system for the combined \$1.5bn a year now in the two different-tasked funds (CMM June 5). This creates enormous opportunities for medical research lobbies to suggest ways in which a new system could work in their and the national interest (which are of course synonymous). (CMM – 7 Jun)

[For NSW unis China is the market that still matters.](#) Universities Australia is pleased indeed with national figures on earnings from international students. 'Exports underpin Australia's economy, and education is the biggest one we don't dig out of the ground,' UA's Catriona Jackson says. Education is certainly up there with iron ore in economic significance and according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, international students here are now at 94 per cent of pre-Covid. (CMM – 8 Jun)

[Bargaining argybargy not all-over at Uni Sydney.](#) There's a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, it's for National Tertiary Education Union members to consider a proposed enterprise agreement. After two years of negotiations (it just seems longer) there is a proposal (headlined by an 18 per cent payrise over the agreement) that union negotiators recommend to members. Management offers need approval by NTEU members and those of the other campus union, the CPSU, before they can be put to an all-staff vote. (CMM – 8 Jun)

[Monash VC paper on pay: point made.](#) Soon to be governor of Victoria, Margaret Gardner publishes a considered piece on HE funding, the role of casuals and the complexities of university-system payroll practises (scroll down). It appeared as Deputy President Bell of the Fair Work Commission knocked Monash U back over an attempt to add words to the 2019 enterprise agreement, to end an ambiguity regarding times when casual staff are paid for student contact. (CMM – 9 Jun)

[A new agreement at Uni Adelaide – more coming soon in SA.](#) The offer is endorsed by both management and union. Some 92 per cent of the poll backed the offer-anchored by a 13.9 per cent (compounded) pay rise from this July to '25 (CMM May 3). Flinders U votes in next week to vote on a similar offer (CMM May 2). As are staff at Uni SA (CMM May 4), where voting ends Tuesday. Given successful negotiations between management and the NTEU staff approval is expected at both. (CMM – 9 Jun)

[Uni Sydney offer to staff sets a national standard.](#) The proposed enterprise agreement at Uni Sydney took as long to negotiate as the Geneva Convention – there is no mention of prisoner exchanges but otherwise it's a big deal. Not all the NTEU are happy (CMM yesterday) but if this gets up it will be the benchmark all other university agreements are



compared to and it will pile on the pressure at the other rich as Croesus campus – Uni Melbourne. (CMM – 9 Jun)

[Gardner of Monash calls for a 'grand bargain' between unions and unis.](#) In a long piece published by Monash U, VC Margaret Gardner considers university system pay policies in the context of public funding, research administration models, the growth of international student numbers and the industrial relations system. (CMM – 9 Jun)

[TEQSA CEO exits.](#) Alistair Maclean has resigned from the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. TEQSA confirmed his departure in a statement last night in which agency Chief Commissioner Peter Coaldrake, 'acknowledged Mr Maclean for his contribution.' Mary Russell will be acting CEO until further notice. Dr Russell is ED for Regulatory Operations at the agency. (CMM – 9 Jun)

[A bargain for workers that beats bureaucracy and bastardry.](#) Margaret Gardner (Monash U VC) calls for a universities-unions 'grand bargain' to sort out employment practices. This includes, 'systematic difficulties in interpretation of payment schedules, and therefore payment accuracy, that have exacerbated issues for the employment and payment of those in insecure employment.' (CMM June 9). She has a point, cases come before the Fair Work Commission in which the parties to industrial agreements can't agree on what agreements in agreements they agreed to mean. In one Uni Newcastle dispute the FWC politely pointed out, 'the parties have understandably had a high degree of difficulty in considering these agreement clauses' (CMM September 6 2021). (CMM - 13 Jun)

[HELP understanding HECS.](#) There's a political pile-on about the impact of indexation to student debt – Carol Ey from the excellent Parliamentary Library explains what's happening and in its usual Joe Friday ('just the facts Ma'am') fashion. In particular she sets out how indexation is factored and explains why the new figure is 7.1 per cent, in line with the 12 month CPI increase as of March, but how last year's was 3.9 per cent, a full 1 per cent below CPI. Indexation used to be based on Average Weekly Earnings, which the coalition government changed in CPI in 2018 – which accounts for some of the anguish from graduates whose debt is increasing faster than their pay. (CMM – 13 Jun)

[Deal \(nearly\) done at Uni Newcastle.](#) At long, long last (talking about talks started in September '21) management and NTEU leadership appear to have settled on terms for new enterprise agreements. It took a big effort at the end with Fair Work Deputy President Saunders facilitating a fortnight of talks (CMM, May 31, June 5). So what's in the deal? Those who know aren't talking. (CMM – 13 Jun)

[More micro-credentials.](#) News of m-cs was released to the government's friends in old media, in time for Sunday papers. 'New micro-credential courses to support in-demand jobs' is the pitch, making it a natural for the papers. Some 18 unis share \$18.5m for 28 courses, in engineering and IT, science and education. There will be another round within 12 months. 'The pilot programme is part of the Albanese Government's broader efforts to promote micro-credentials.' (CMM – 13 Jun)

[La Trobe U pay for longer hours offer 'extra egregious' says union.](#) LTU's enterprise bargaining pay offer is 13.6 per cent 2023-25, plus it points to a 2 per cent admin pay rise last year. But the union responds that 3.6 per cent of the offer is to cover a proposed increase in working hours, which is not on. 'Management have the funds to offer the 3.6 per cent and they should do so without the increase in annual hours worked by staff,' says the campus branch of the National Tertiary Education Union. (CMM – 14 Jun)

[What students pay for isn't always education.](#) The Public Universities Australia lobby is unhappy with utilitarian attitudes to education among ministers who see it is about, 'securing employment, which supposedly ensures that graduates are able to earn a good income from which they can afford to repay their student loan debt.' This PUA argues in considerable length is wrong on many grounds, ethical, educational, financial and philosophical. (CMM – 14 Jun)

[Uni Adelaide's slim surplus.](#) It reports a 2022 operating result of \$12m and an underlying outcome of \$14m. The operating profit is down \$186m on 2021 – for mostly the same reasons universities in eastern states have had less declines than free-falls in earnings. Uni Adelaide reports falls in investment income, no one-off Commonwealth pandemic funding and the continuing effect of Covid caused enrolment falls. (CMM – 14 Jun)

[Easier country practise.](#) In their review of initial teacher education Mark Scott (Uni Sydney) and colleagues suggest,

'developing more comprehensive system level agreements between school systems ... and higher education providers,' – the Andrews Government is already on to it. There's \$32m for 11 000 rural, regional and other targeted teacher education placements over two years. The money is for initial teacher education students' accommodation, travel and meals on three-week placements. It is open to all, although launching La Trobe U Bendigo might indicated a focus on regional need and political message. (CMM – 14 Jun)

[A new deal at Uni Sydney.](#) After nearly two years of negotiations National Tertiary Education Union members voted yesterday to accept management's enterprise agreement offer. In what is said to be the largest meeting of the NTEU in the university's history, members voted 688 in favour, 172 opposed, with 21 abstentions. With the Community and Public Sector Union also said to support the offer, it should now go to an all-staff vote. And if it is knocked back there CMM has no clue what union and management negotiators will do, although a serious interest in whisky would be understandable. (CMM – 14 Jun)

[USQ micro-creds meeting needs.](#) Uni Southern Queensland picks up federal funding in the new micro-credentials pilot programme. It's for m-cs on drone mapping/navigation and Geographic Information Systems, which will 'tackle chronic skills shortages' in urban planning and surveying. (CMM – 15 Jun)

[Good deals done in SA.](#) Uni SA staff voting were all but unanimous in support of the enterprise agreement offer. Some 93 per cent of the poll voted yes which about as good as it gets in EA votes. Uni Adelaide staff voting also backed a similar offer, with a 92 per cent yes (CMM June 9). The ballot opens electronically at Flinders U today, which makes it tough for exit polling, but word on campus is that a similar result is expected. (CMM – 15 Jun)

[Where there's WIL there could be an Accord way.](#) The Trades Support Loans Amendment Bill was in the Repts yesterday – it might matter more than it sounds. For those who, (like CMM), have missed this one, the bill extends income contingent loans, now for apprentices and trainees in listed technician and trade occupations to other in-demand areas, aged care, disability care and childcare, get a mention. 'The indications are that, for women, especially unpaid placements as part of their nursing and teacher training, it can be particularly challenging,



leading to what is being dubbed 'placement poverty' as they're forced to give up paid work to do their on-the-job training,' Zoe Daniel (Independent-Vic) said in the Reps yesterday. (CMM – 15 Jun)

Staff sceptical about SA uni merger.

Public university people across SA wonder about the proposed merger of Uni Adelaide and Uni SA. A poll by the National Tertiary Education Union of 1100 people at Flinders U, Uni Adelaide and Uni SA, found 21 per cent believe the merger will result in better education and 29 per cent that it will improve research. Just a quarter support the merger overall. (CMM – 17 Jun)

Making things in Melbourne: once motors now medtech.

The Vic Government is backing a \$10.77m skills and device hub at Uni Melbourne, to develop training courses, degrees and internships in medtech. With admirable confidence the university announces, 'it will deliver up to a dozen investment-ready start-ups and 1,000 industry-based training places and support local companies to develop and manufacture medtech products onshore and expand exports to the booming global market.' (CMM – 17 Jun)

Future Campus – the news you need by

Tim Winkler. Thousands of people across the higher education sector have signed up to Future Campus, the newsletter and website launching next week. We've already had commitments from a range of people ready to contribute their insights for the tens of thousands of people who have enjoyed CMM each day, will bring a sense of continuity with articles and interviews by Stephen Matchett. In keeping with our vision of an information, news and analysis hub for the sector and by the sector, Future Campus will bring you voices, views and insights that feel relevant, and that you won't find elsewhere. We won't be CMM but are seeking to bring a range of useful content with a newsletter that comes to you at least once a week, as well as special editions focused on key issues relevant to the sector. New content will appear on the site most days and we will start bringing reports, events and other resources that you have been telling us you want. Sign up and receive Future Campus straight to your inbox, free of charge on 22 June. It should be a fascinating ride.

Subscribe at: www.futurecampus.com.au

BIG DATA, DATA ANALYTICS, BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

World-first quantum computer challenge.

Minister-friendly media are all-over the government's quantum strategy, applauding intent, anticipating achievements which won't be hard to accomplish – except for academics. The document includes eight 'indicators of success,' most of which will be easily achieved, what with there being no hard numbers. One, 'a strong quantum technology industry' will be measured by the number of companies and their valuation and investment leveraged by industry – there is no word on baselines. (CMM – 5 May)

Lessons from AI. 'Many teaching techniques have proven value but are hard to put into practice because they are time-consuming for overworked instructors to apply,' Ethan and Lilach Mollick (the Wharton School) – but they may not be so stretched if they learn to use AI. The Mollicks set out how AI can create content for five teaching strategies. (CMM – 23 May)

Good for AI. A House of Reps committee is inquiring into AI in education – here's a positive idea they may want to consider. 'Human tutoring is very expensive, and it is hard to find enough high-quality human tutors. With regard to large-scale needs, if it is possible for an (Intelligent Tutoring System) to supplement what human tutors do, it might be possible to extend beyond the amount of tutoring that people can provide to students.' (CMM – 30 May)

Cyber threats for NSW unis (and people whose records they keep on keeping).

Universities in NSW copped from none to 1777 attacks last year, according to the state Auditor General's report on the system. The range is due to the different ways universities define 'cyber incidents,' with one not recording blocked attempts anywhere. The Auditor advises 31 per cent, did not require IT vendors to tell them about attacks – these must have occurred before July, when universities became required to report 'cyber incidents'. (CMM – 7 Jun)

REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Claire Field on mixed futures for international ed providers. I was travelling when Minister for Home Affairs Claire O'Neil addressed the National Press Club last week, but I had downloaded the Final Report of the Migration Review and read

the international education chapter carefully before we landed. As I turned my phone back on, I was still musing how the ideas proposed for international education would be progressed when I opened an email from a very senior leader saying: 'I expect all hell to break loose in coming days as the HE sector digests what (Minister O'Neil) said and the changes which are coming very soon. I see some HE business models in serious trouble ...' (CMM – 3 May)

Understanding and using the linked LSAY-NAPLAN data: issues and considerations.

The latest NCVER report provides recommendations for using the linked Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) and National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data. Linking LSAY results to NAPLAN achievement scores has the potential to provide more detailed, accurate and objective information about young people's academic achievement at several stages of schooling. However, consent must first be obtained to undertake the linkage which may introduce bias if the characteristics of those who consent are different from those who do not. The research Understanding and using the linked LSAY-NAPLAN data: issues and considerations explores the factors affecting a respondent's propensity to consent to the data linkage and uses customised weights to address any potential bias. This allows for a unique longitudinal perspective on academic achievement across multiple stages of schooling and the transition of young Australians from school into adulthood. (NCVER – 4 May)

Short and to the point: Germany can teach us about training writes Claire Field.

It's training guidelines for apprentices in hospitality takes 66 pages – Australia's package is 2444 pp. As Australia embarks on VET qualification reforms designed to focus on 'transferable and relevant skills' it has been instructive being in Germany and discussing their VET system with government officials, trade union and employer representatives and Dr Junjin Li a VET expert from the University of Cologne. (CMM – 10 May)

What's next as global rankings turn 20.

In Features this morning Angel Calderon (RMIT) on what's changed, what's about to, two decades in. 'Australia is a lucky country. Over the past twenty years, Australia's scholarly output growth was above the rate of the United States and the United Kingdom and many other Western countries, but significantly below



the rate of China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia. However, Australia's growth rate over the past five years is weakening,' he writes. (CMM – 16 May)

[As the economy changes save workers not jobs by Claire Field.](#) The Swedes show us the way to help redundant workers. Last week's Federal Budget included changes to the Local Jobs scheme which 'supports the development and implementation of tailored approaches to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment across Australia.' The changes will provide a flexible funding pool for 'small scale local activities that help address community identified needs' and additional Employment Facilitators being placed into regions 'experiencing rapid and significant challenges, including as part of the transition to a clean energy future.' (CMM – 17 May)

HERDSA CONNECT v.45 No. 1 is now online. The latest issue of HERDSA CONNECT has been published online, v.45 n.1, Autumn 2023.
<https://www.herdsa.org.au/publications/herdsa-connect/herdsa-connect-vol-45-no-1> (CMM - 18 May)

[Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on VET.](#) The COVID-19 pandemic had a big effect on Australia's VET sector. It caused problems with mandatory work placements, fewer students enrolled and engaged, and affected staff wellbeing and retention. Disadvantaged students and those living in high-infection regions were the groups most affected. Training providers responded to the individual needs of students during the pandemic by introducing a combination of online and in-person teaching, flexible work options, better hygiene protocols, and mental health and wellbeing programs. This led to significant changes in their business processes, including the shift to blended learning, which will be long-lasting. The pandemic has also had an impact on the income and financial viability of training providers. While there was some improvement in late 2020 and early 2021, many providers reported the situation was still challenging. This highlights the sector's continual need for adaptation and resilience. (NCVER 25 May)

[Work placements: paying people is the fair thing to do by Claire Field.](#) As work integrated learning increases, we cannot afford for only middle-class domestic students to be comfortably able to access opportunities. The Universities Accord Discussion Paper asks about universities collaboration with industry and notes that

'by international standards, the current links in Australia between higher education and industry in learning and teaching are under-developed'. The paper goes on to note the challenges work-integrated learning poses for students from regional, rural and remote areas. (CMM – 31 May)

[Claire Field on the good governance must do.](#) Two important documents had my attention last week – the first was a March 2023 report of an evaluation by the South Australian ICAC into TAFE SA. Before I go any further let me make it VERY clear – this was not an ICAC investigation – it was an anti-corruption body working in a preventative capacity to check that TAFE SA's policies, procedures and ways of operating show an understanding of the potential risks of corruption. (CMM – 7 Jun)

[Claire Field farewells CMM with calls on three big issues.](#) Higher education – equity. As university leaders read the latest public opinion results which show growing support for the 'no' case on the Voice to Parliament – they would do well to listen to my podcast interview with ECU's Braden Hill. In a detailed discussion about what equity in higher education really involves, Professor Hill not only goes on to remind us of Megan Davis' warning at the UA conference that 'silence (on the Voice) is a political decision'. He goes on to ask, 'if the no vote wins, will we be comfortable with the role our sector played?'

Higher education – changing world of work. Congratulations to the University of Melbourne and the University of Sydney's business schools for the work they are doing to help both employers and their alumni adapt and respond to the changing world of work. As I have watched the growing prevalence of short courses being offered within and outside traditional tertiary institutions, I had wondered if Australia's oldest and most research-intensive universities would sit back and rely on their reputations and prestige. Last week in two separate meetings – it was great to see that in fact both universities are acutely aware of and responding to the growing demand for short, just-in-time, courses to help people and organisations adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world. I look forward to seeing their respective next steps.

VET – funding My first column for CMM focussed on VET data and funding and that's where this one ends. In Senate Estimates, officials released the latest

data showing how the Federal Government's Fee Free TAFE funding is being allocated (and they are to be congratulated for doing so, state governments have typically shared far less data on their Free TAFE initiatives). Officials also signalled a move to greater national consistency in VET funding in the new National Skills Agreement through a 'shared stewardship model.' I have unpacked the details of both initiatives on my website and I discuss the impact of changing VET funding with Kallibr Training CEO, Gerard Healy, on an upcoming episode of the podcast. (CMM – 14 Jun)

POSITIONS VACANT

FIND YOUR DREAM JOB!

AAIR.ORG.AU/HIGHER-ED-JOBS/

[Visit the AAIR Jobs Board](#)

Find a Job

Advertise a Job

AAIR members are emailed every time a new job is listed. Click below to join!

AAIR
Australasian Association for Institutional Research

Become a member



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

[Call for Submissions — Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association](#). Do you have student services research or good practice to share with the tertiary education sector in Australia, NZ, and internationally? You are invited to submit a paper to JANZSSA for Online First publication during 2023, and inclusion in the October issue. JANZSSA provides a distinctive space for practitioners and researchers to reflect upon, and share, practice to enhance student engagement, participation, wellbeing, and success.

Research Participation - Mentoring Experiences. We are looking for participants to complete a CAULLT funded research to explore the experiences of mentors and mentees who participated in the HERDSA or ASCILITE mentoring program. The anonymous online survey takes no more than about 10 minutes. Please use the link to see the participation information sheet and survey. Further information:

https://unsw.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_equkYdD3YtUdWmi

SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications are now open for the 2024 National Library of Australia Scholarships and the 2024 Asia Study Grants. It would be much appreciated if you could forward this information on to any students and researchers in your organisation who may be interested in these opportunities. The National Library of Australia Scholarships support PhD students who require access to the National Library's collections to assist their postgraduate research. There are six scholarships available in 2024, with two specifically designated for Australian First Nations students. The Asia Study Grants provide both academics and PhD students with the opportunity to research the Library's Asian language and Asia-related collections for four weeks. Up to five grants will be awarded in 2024. Guidelines for these scholarships and grants as well as links to the online application forms are available online at <https://www.nla.gov.au/about/fellowships-scholarships-and-grants/fellowships-and-scholarships>. Applications will close on Monday 26 June 2023.

Scholarships of \$1000-\$7000 per person are available for women in the Education, Training and Development Sector. To encourage more women to increase their impact at work and step into leadership

roles across the higher education sector, WLA is offering scholarships for four leadership development courses. Apply by July 31 or find out more by clicking here:

<https://www.wla.edu.au/industry/education>

PODCASTS AND WEBINARS

CMM goes the full Mr Ed. In a free webinar, Stephen Matchett and guests will discuss a decade of the movers, shakers and breakers who made HE news and how they did it. Future Campus editor Tim Winkler will keep things seemly. Join us for an outsider's perspective on the inner workings of university communications, the challenges of ten years reporting CMM and why the comms contests in education are going to get harder – all straight from an HE reporting horse's mouth.

Thursday 29 June 9-10am

Webinar – free

Sign up here

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/have-i-got-news-for-you-tickets-660208520457>

AAIR ONLINE EVENTS

[VIEW ALL AAIR EVENTS](#)



[LAYERING BI & ANALYTICS WITH SMARTS \(PART 1\)](#)

5 July 2023
(12–1pm AEST / 2–3pm NZST)

Presenters: Lester DSouza (National Manager, Business Intelligence) and Leon Bombotas (Chief Data and Insights Officer), Australian Catholic University

It's the right time to discuss how we can make our BI and analytical processes smarter. In the age of ChatGPT, how can we harness the smarts of automated insights and make life easier for the community? Come along to this session to learn more and discuss.

[REGISTER NOW](#)



[FRESH AAIR \(NEWBIES NETWORKING\)](#)

4 August 2023
(12–1pm AEST / 2–3pm NZST)

Hosted by AAIR, convened by:

- Andrew Bradshaw, AAIR Executive Committee Member
- Pallavi Khanna, AAIR Executive Committee Member
- Liesha Northover, AAIR Executive Officer

AAIR would like to welcome and get to know our new members and reconnect with returning members.

This casual virtual get-together is an opportunity for us to all say 'hi' and have a chat about ourselves and our roles, and meet other AAIR members.

This event is open to new, returning, and current members who are seeking to broaden their peer network and get more information about the services that AAIR offers to members. Grab a coffee and come along to meet colleagues and make new friends. Non-members also welcome.

[REGISTER NOW](#)



[SHARING OUR EXPERIENCES IN HOW TO CONDUCT INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH IN THE ACADEMIC RESEARCH 2/2023](#)

16 August 2023
(12–1pm AEST / 2–3pm NZST)

How do we go about building useful insights to help universities understand how successful we are at our research endeavours? Planning, data, and analytics teams traditionally support educational institutional analytics, but the era of



supporting academic research institutional analytics is here!

We invite you to join us in having a ConvAAIRsation about:

- how you do this at your institution
- sharing the pressing questions that you hope other institutions can help answer
- identifying how we can leverage each others' experiences to learn to do better at building useful insights for our research communities.

REGISTER NOW

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 assessment, planning, and related fields.

HE CONFERENCES AND 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.

ON THE MOVE

At Monash U, Sarah McDonald becomes PVC Student Experience and Allie Clemans, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching). They are both internal appointments.

At Swinburne U Saeid Nahavandi becomes inaugural Associate DVC Research and Chief of Defence Innovation. He joins from Deakin U.

Jodie (Martin-Blick) Altan starts as Associate PVC Engagement at RMIT Vietnam.

Craig Jeffrey will leave Uni Melbourne to become PVC International at Monash U in July.

Steven Warburton will become PVC Education Innovation at Uni Newcastle in June. He moves from Uni New England.

Niranjan Prabhu will become Uni Sunshine Coast's Chief Information Officer. He starts in August, moving from Australian Catholic U.

At Federation U Gabriele Suder is confirmed as Associate DVC Academic – she has been acting in the role.

Matthew Clarke will be acting DVC R at Deakin U from July end. The university is recruiting for the position.

Alyssa White becomes Chief Governance Officer at Uni Sydney, stepping up from deputy. She replaces David Pacey, who moves to University College London to be university secretary. UCL is run by former Uni Sydney VC Michael Spence.

Glenn Campbell moves from Deakin U to become CEO of Western Sydney U's pathway provider, The College.

At Uni Melbourne, Barry Judd moves to inaugural DVC Indigenous. Professor Judd steps up from PVC Indigenous at the university.

Their Serenities convened at QUT yesterday and confirmed David Lloyd (VC Uni SA) as the new chair of Universities Australia.

Monash VC Margaret Gardner is the next governor of Victoria. She finishes the old job on Friday August 4 and starts the new one the following Wednesday.

Sonya Stanford is now PVC of Uni Tasmania's Cradle Coast campus. She was previously an associate dean for learning and teaching performance in the College of Arts, Law and Education.





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 ...**

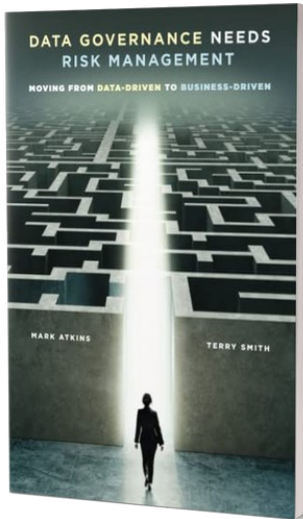
Click here to visit air.org.au/events



GOOD READS

Data Governance Needs Risk Management

Mark Aktins and Terry Smith



Gain confidence in regulatory compliance, drive effective infotech investment, and uplift organizational knowledge for effective data governance.

Based on the authors' extensive experience and reinforced with case studies, this book presents their award-winning framework of business tools and techniques. It provides a 4-point strategy for achieving business-driven information governance aligned with business risk management to ensure the delivery of quality and reliable information.

Master a structured approach to sharing knowledge and defining business terms by removing ambiguous terminology from business communications. Raise awareness of cross-organizational misalignment and improve communication through a clearly defined business language. Use the knowledge capture technique to establish and strengthen responsibility for business information, and empower dynamic communities focused on resolving business concerns. Improve communication with data scientists and engineers on business needs, ensuring a higher return on infotech investment and reliable information in reports and dashboards. Expand business capability for business-side information governance over key information artifacts and related data.

The four-point strategy culminates in establishing a governed business encyclopedia of organizational knowledge, including a glossary of

business terms and definitions, an open register for issues, and how these all relate with key artifacts, including dashboards, policies, operating procedures, and data sets.

[Buy Now](#)

Interested in Data Governance Needs Risk Management? Why not attend the official book launch!

You're invited to celebrate with us for an evening of inspiration!

Terry Smith and Mark Atkins are proud to present their new book, *Data Governance Needs Risk Management—Moving from Data-driven to Business-driven*, with foreword by John Stanhope AM, Chancellor of Deakin University.

Tuesday 25th July 2023 6:00 p.m.

The Belvedere Hotel (Level 1)

482 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Drinks and canapés provided. Places are limited, so book early.

There will be a presentation in support of The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (The ILF) followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with the authors, Terry Smith and Mark Atkins, and panel guests:

- David Miller, CDO, Macquarie University;
- Michelle Pinheiro, CRO, Data & Technology, ANZ;
- Graham Witt, author of several books, including *Data Modeling for Quality* and *Technical Writing for Quality*

There will also be an opportunity to purchase discounted copies of *Data Governance Needs Risk Management*, with book signing provided by the authors.

Special guest to be announced.

Tickets \$50 (40% discount available to members of IIBA Australia and DAMA Australia – contact us for details).

[Get tickets](#)

All ticket proceeds will be donated to support The Indigenous Literacy Foundation's purchase and supply of books and literacy resources to remote Indigenous Communities.



TIME-SAVING HACKS WITH CHATGPT

by Mel Kettle

Leadership Communication Expert



There has been a lot in the media recently about the perils and pitfalls of using AI technology such as ChatGPT. What isn't talked about as often, is how brilliant it can be when used as a productivity hack.

ChatGPT, if you're wondering, is an AI-driven language processing tool that allows you to have a human-like conversation with a chatbot. It is similar to Google, in that you ask it for information. However, where a search engine will give you a list of websites to find the information you seek, ChatGPT uses the information on the websites to give you a response.

When it comes to my day job, I've been using ChatGPT for idea generation, to draft newsletters, re-write dull copy, streamline daily and weekly planning, create templates, and more.

I also use it a lot to help me save time with basic and often boring household chores, such as meal planning and asking for recipe ideas using the random ingredients in my fridge.

However, as with all new things, there is a learning curve. And its success depends a lot on the instructions or commands you feed into it. Full disclosure, it's not always accurate, so always double-check the facts before using the answers provided.

For ChatGPT to be at its most effective, you need to provide it with a persona,

context, and a task. For example, I recently asked it to 'give me three recipes to use up ricotta and baby spinach (the task), to feed two adults (the persona)'. I forgot to add the context – make them vegetarian – which I realised when the first recipe was for spinach and ricotta stuffed chicken breasts. Delicious, but not helpful when I had no chicken and no interest in going to a supermarket that afternoon to purchase some.

1. Meal planning

ChatGPT is fantastic for helping me work out what to cook, based on the ingredients in my fridge. It's also great for working out weekly meal plans using some of our standard ingredients, but with a slightly different tweak. For example, when I asked ChatGPT, 'What are five recipes using chicken thigh fillets, that all have a different flavour profile?' I was given recipes for dishes including lemon garlic, Thai red curry, honey mustard, Mediterranean chicken, and Korean-style sticky chicken. YUM!

2. Grocery shopping

I take my meal plan and ask for a grocery list to take to the supermarket, or plug into my online shopping app.

3. Holiday planning

By the time you read this I will have returned from a week in Singapore. ChatGPT helped me find great places to visit, to eat and drink at, and provided me with packing lists so I wouldn't forget any of the essentials.

4. Health and wellness

I'm trying to do more basic stretching at home, and ChatGPT has given me a set of exercises to do, focusing on a pulled quad muscle and sore hip flexors.

5. Creating to-do lists

I find this useful if I'm doing something new. A lot of my friends are currently using ChatGPT to find out how to care for elderly parents. I asked it, 'What are the things I need to consider and do in order to find a nursing home for my 83-year-old mother to move into?' and it gave me an extremely thorough list to consider.

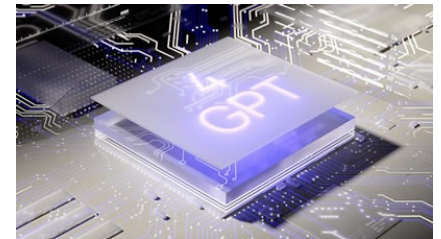
6. Brainstorming activities to do with my partner or kids

Like many couples who have been together for ages, it's easy to do the same things again and again. I asked ChatGPT for 10 low-cost free activity ideas for date

nights. I told it our ages and where we live, and it gave me some fabulous suggestions (although at least half of them would need to be done during the day).

7. Writing tricky emails

While I haven't personally used it for this yet, a friend of mine has. She had to write a reply to a nasty email from an ex and asked ChatGPT to re-write her very swearsy draft 😊



Are you using ChatGPT as a time-saving tool? I'd love to know how.

Mel Kettle is an internationally recognised expert in fully connected leadership and communication. With more than two decades of experience, Mel is a valuable asset to leaders and teams that want to achieve real connection and sustained engagement. She is the host of the podcast, *This Connected Life*, and the author of two books, the best-selling *Fully Connected* and *The Social Association*.

Connect with Mel



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five quick questions with Juan Laverde Velasco Macquarie University



What is your job title?

Head of Student Load Planning at Macquarie University.

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

I am responsible for the load planning activities for the university, including fee setting, commencing enrolment estimates, and load and revenue forecasts. I create and maintain the models behind the estimates and help run the load planning activities, ensuring alignment between recruitment areas and academic areas. I provide analytical support to the recruitment areas to help convert recruitment targets into admissions targets, and help track actuals against targets.

From your perspective, what will be the key skills, capabilities, and knowledge required for institutional research moving forward?

I think a strong technical knowledge in data collection and analysis is needed, complemented with great communication skills to translate those insights into words that different areas within the university can understand and relate to. An understanding of the higher education sector and its regulatory environment is also critical.

What do you believe will be the future priorities or the emerging areas of interest for institutional research since the emergence of COVID-19?

I think the rise of AI is something to look closely at, as traditional reporting and insights will most likely not cut it in the years ahead.

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

... great data wrangling tools such as [Alteryx](#), support from the executive, and a great and diverse team.

Connect with Juan

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.

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



ENEWS SIGNUP



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



[Andrew Bradshaw](#)
Editor, *The Institutional Researcher*

DISCLAIMER

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

