



STUDENT SUCCESS

C O N F E R E N C E

29 JUNE - 1 JULY 2026
NOVOTEL SUNSHINE COAST RESORT

PROCEEDINGS

15A REFEREED PAPER STUDENTS

Reading the Room: Understanding Student Approaches to Respectful Behaviour in Informal Study Space on Campus

Sascha Jenkins
CDU

Catharine Pruscino, Caitlin Austin-Kanafani, Daniel Hamilton, Jasmine Lewin
UTS

The National Student Safety Survey 2021 identifies libraries as one of the main places where sexual harassment occurs on campus, with little research undertaken into the nature, cause and prevention of sexual harassment or disrespectful behaviour in Australian university libraries and informal learning spaces. This study aims to understand the experiences and perceptions of the University of Technology Sydney community on safety and disrespectful behaviour. Our research draws on physical, societal and cultural ideas of safe spaces, examining how students interpret and regulate respectful and disrespectful behaviour in informal study spaces, and how these practices align with staff understandings of institutional prevention strategies. Drawing on interviews with students and staff, and student workshops to test and refine insights, we identify 'reading the room' as a dominant practice for students in normalising behaviour in informal learning environments. This paper discusses the insights gained and how these might impact and shape engagement in the prevention space on university campuses.

15B EMERGING INITIATIVE SUCCESS

Student perceptions of what is important for success

Dr Rebecca J Bird, Dr Stephen G Scott
University of Otago

Universities have traditionally emphasised attendance as a key contributor to student engagement and academic success. However, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted established norms, accelerating reliance on asynchronous learning and reshaping student behaviours and expectations. This study examines first-year student perceptions of the relative importance of attendance, engagement, motivation, and wellbeing for academic success. Data were collected over three years using anonymous polling during O Week. Students prioritised motivation and wellbeing, while attendance is identified by < 5%. These findings suggest a potential misalignment between student perceptions and institutional expectations.

15C EMERGING INITIATIVE STUDENTS

Supporting Every Learner: Developing an Inclusive Peer-Leader Training Model Through Cross-Campus Collaboration

Jules Page, Souad Ahmen
Murdoch University

This emerging initiative explores the development of a structured, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)-informed professional development model (Murdoch University, 2023) for Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS) Leaders and Peer Academic Coaches (PACs). In response to increasing student diversity and engagement with peer-learning programs, the initiative aims to equip peer leaders to support students with varied identities, backgrounds, and learning needs. The model integrates specialist-led training in cultural awareness, accessibility, neurodiversity, and inclusive communication, alongside experiential learning and reflective practice (Kolb, 2015). It extends existing frameworks through cross-campus collaboration and targeted inclusion training and invites discussion on enhancing inclusive student success across institutions.

15D EMERGING INITIATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Simplifying rubric design to improve marker efficiency and reliability in online assessment: An action research study

A/Prof Tracey Ahern, Tracey Gooding
JCU

This paper reports on the methodology and findings of a course level action research project undertaken to design, trial, and refine a simplified assessment rubric aimed at improving marker experience, enhancing grading efficiency, and strengthening inter-rater reliability. The study outlines key insights gained through the iterative research process and presents the resulting streamlined rubric, which has since been adopted widely across the course.