

03.6.2026

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**Title**

Good practice for enhancing the engagement and success of commencing students / Karen J. Nelson

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**Publication year**

2012

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education. - 63 (2012) 1, S. 83 - 96

**Inventory number**

31473

**Keywords**

Ausland : Australien : einzelne Hochschulen ; Ausland : Australien : Studenten, Studium, Lehre ;  
Studentenschaft : Studienverhalten

**Abstract**

There is widespread recognition that higher education institutions (HEIs) must actively support commencing students to ensure equity in access to the opportunities afforded by higher education. This role is particularly critical for students who because of educational, cultural or financial disadvantage or because they are members of social groups currently under-represented in higher education, may require additional transitional support to 'level the playing field.' The challenge faced by HEIs is to provide this 'support' in a way that is integrated into regular teaching and learning practices and reaches all commencing students. The Student Success Program (SSP) is an intervention in operation at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) designed to identify and support those students deemed to be at risk of disengaging from their learning and their institution. Two sets of evidence of the impact of the SSP are presented: First, its expansion (a) from a one-faculty pilot project (Nelson et al. in Stud Learn Eval Innov Dev 6:1?15, 2009) to all faculties and (b) into a

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variety of applications mirroring the student life cycle; and second, an evaluation of the impact of the SSP on students exposed to it. The outcomes suggest that: the SSP is an example of good practice that can be successfully applied to a variety of learning contexts and student enrolment situations; and the impact of the intervention on student persistence is sustained for at least 12 months and positively influences student retention. It is claimed that the good practice evidenced by the SSP is dependent on its integration into the broader First Year Experience Program at QUT as an example of transition pedagogy in action. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Nelson, Karen J., E-Mail: [kj.nelson@qut.edu.au](mailto:kj.nelson@qut.edu.au)