



RESPONSE TO THE ACCORD INTERIM REPORT

24 August 2023

Submitted by Studiosity to the Accord Panel

About: Studiosity's mission is to increase the life chances of every student by helping them succeed in their studies. We partner with 150 Higher Education Institutions in APAC and Europe to serve 1.6 million students, delivering immediate, personalised, 24/7 support. With more than 20 years experience in online education, 80% of Australia's universities now partner with Studiosity to grow a variety of institutional and regulatory student success metrics, including: student satisfaction, academic integrity, retention (16.5% measured increase), and academic success (8% measured increase in course average). Australian founded and owned, Studiosity is also now the global leader in student success services, preferred for our quality academic and technological standards.

To the Universities Australia Accord Panel,

Re: Acknowledgment of and Support for the Panel's Work to progress Student Experience and Access to Higher Education in Australia.

We express our appreciation for the diligent efforts of Chair Prof Mary O'Kane and the Accord Panel, in imagining a more student-focused higher education system and instigating the required system-wide change now. The insights and recommendations offer enormous value and it is clear that the Australian Government is committed to genuine, meaningful action to bolster the prospects of Australians, industry, and the economy.

Holistically, the Accord Interim Report addresses equity, accountability, and economic opportunity, all underpinned by the higher education sector delivering what needs to be a satisfactory, successful, and personalised student experience. In this submission, we applaud the intentions and outputs of the Accord to date, as evidenced by the Interim Report.

We also take this opportunity to continue to push the boundaries of what's possible for Australian students, industry, and the public; namely:

a. Immediate, affirmative, scaled action is needed to increase connection and belonging amongst First Nations students in both secondary and tertiary education.

b. Intervention in the education sector must prioritise digital infrastructure so that individuals are treated fairly, for opportunities in and via education, social, and community participation, for life chances.

Sincerely,

Michael Larsen
CEO & Managing Director - Studiosity

Chris Fitzpatrick
General Manager, Asia-Pacific - Studiosity

a. Immediate, affirmative, scaled action is needed to increase connection and belonging amongst First Nations students in both secondary and tertiary education.

What if,

over the past five years, Australian education had fostered equitable, personal connections between:



213,894 high school students



and



19,237 university mentors

What could be achieved over the next five?

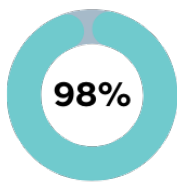
Greater connection, belonging, and academic success are possible - now. Australia, we can do better, faster.

- The widening of demand-driven funding of places for First Nations students is to be commended, but students sometimes fail to thrive at university because they are not prepared. Interventions and support need to be applied upstream in secondary schools so that students being accepted into higher education are better equipped to succeed. Just as the Accord wisely recognises the inequity of explicitly excluding First Nations students in metropolitan areas under prior policy, students in high school right now are receiving varying degrees of support to improve capability and varied aspirational exposure to further education.
- An equitable, national First Nations mentoring program between all high school students and university students will help address this, fostering connection that draws on personal lived experiences. As indicated in 2022-2023 submissions, this scaled model is available and can be delivered in 2024. It promises far-reaching benefits - economically for the paid positions it offers Mentors as well as for making higher education visible. It directly addresses the challenge in the Interim Report that “To reach population parity, as much as 60% of this future enrolment increase in 2035 [an additional 300,000 Commonwealth supported students] would need to come from these equity groups.”

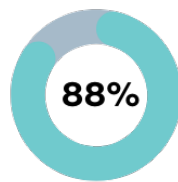
Proposed next steps:

Studiosity will present a detailed plan for implementation of a National Indigenous Mentoring Program for all Indigenous high school students to the Department of Education. If approved, a program could be implemented in the following stages:

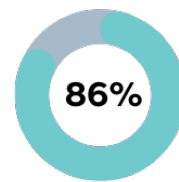
Stage	Activity	Duration / timeline
i.	Pilot in one or more states	2 months to implement
ii.	Evaluate pilot outcomes	End Term 1 2024
iii.	Rollout to all schools in 2024	Term 2 2024
iv.	Evaluate impact on teachers and student outcomes	Early 2025



Easy to use



Feel more confident



Got the help I needed

Responses from NSW and SA First Nations students using Studiosity.

b. Intervention in the education sector must prioritise digital infrastructure so that individuals are treated fairly, for opportunities in and via education, social, and community participation, for life chances.

- Future proofing Australia’s higher education sector requires world-class technology experiences and infrastructure. Notably, during the pandemic the student experience was critiqued - not a reflection on the short-term responses to the crisis - but because for some it was inadequate for years prior and that was made apparent. In 2023, there is only one ‘digital’ chancellery position nationally, ensuring that attention and investment for digital is on par with the physical campus. Despite its importance, an average of just 4% of university budgets goes to digital infrastructure. Providers and students would benefit from targets that look at relative spend in physical vs digital infrastructure, for instance, based on where all students are spending most of their time studying and completing their degree.
- Our experience comes from working to increase participation and increase student success metrics in Australian education over the past two decades. More than 25 university studies point to the impact of Studiosity’s scaled, personalised platform on student success metrics, now delivered in partnership with over 80% of Australian universities. The following case studies are a selection, from providers with a specific focus on serving large populations via sophisticated, modern, digital student experiences.

Case studies:

Student success outcomes amongst Studiosity users

The following extracts represent research from universities that serve large populations as well as online or distance learning students, in particular. For research from more institutions, see the most recent document at: studiosity.com/matrix.

University: CQUniversity, Queensland, Australia

What can we deduce?

Not accounting for other factors, CQU Studiosity users (on average):

- Have a **16.45%** higher rate of retention than the cohort
- Experience **21.7%** less unit failure than the cohort
- Are **17.31%** less likely to be placed on academic probation than the cohort

More analysis is required to understand the link between platform usage, success and retention...



BE HUMAN. DON'T TOUGH.
cqu.edu.au

CH20PPrivateCode:50219C910Code:4859

Presented at the Students First Symposium, by Chris Veraa, Director, Student Experience, Strategic Engagement Directorate. <https://www.studiosity.com/case-study-cquni>

University: Swinburne Online, Victoria, Australia

"On average students who utilise Studiosity received 15% higher marks than those who don't."
swinburne.edu.au

University: La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia

"Overall, 90.4% of students considered their interaction with the service to be positive, with 81% reporting that the service assisted their learning."

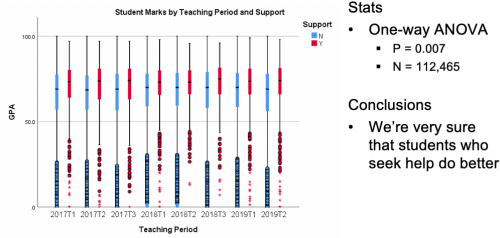
"1/3 student users were based in regional areas, 40% of users were engaging at night."

Dollinger, M., Cox, S., Eaton, R., Vanderlelie, J. and Ridsdale, S., (2020). Investigating the Usage and Perceptions of Third-Party Online Learning Support Services for Diverse Students. *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*, 2020(1), p.14. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/jime.555>

University: University of New England, New South Wales, Australia

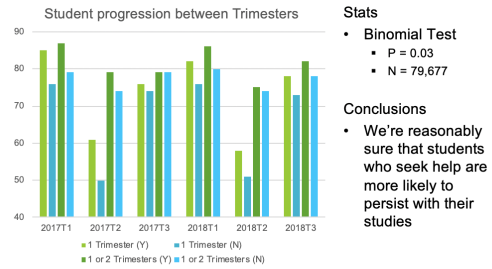
“Reasonably sure students who seek help are more likely to persist, with Binomial Test $P = 0.03$; $N = 79,677$ ”

Impact of support – Success



Analysed using Excel & SPSS

Impact of support - Retention



Analysed using Excel & SPSS

Presented online by Jennifer Lawrence, Program Director - Academic Success, at the University of New England.
<https://www.studiosity.com/blog/students-first-2020-jennifer-lawrence>

Submitted: 24 August 2023

Contact:
 research@studiosity.com