

Mentoring Women from Regional Australia to Realise their Educational and Career Aspirations in Business & Law [HEP1600029]

9 November 2016 to 31 March 2018

Kate Ramzan-Levy, The University of Newcastle

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Modifications: Changed to meet WCAG 2.0 accessibility requirements.
Alternate text inserted for all images. Minor typographical errors corrected.

Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Programme (HEPPP)

2016 National Priorities Pool FINAL REPORT

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In accordance with the Conditions of Grant, you must submit to the Department a Final Report (Clause 6.1 of Part A) and an Acquittal Report (clause 6.4 of Part A).

To meet this obligation, please submit:

- the completed **Final Report** template, in Word and PDF
- the completed and signed **Declaration** form, in PDF
- the completed **Acquittal Report** template, in Excel and PDF.

All documents must be submitted to equity@education.gov.au by **31 December 2017**. If you require additional guidance or clarification, please contact us at equity@education.gov.au.

Contents

List of Tables	3
1. PROJECT SUMMARY (Conditions of Grant, clause 2.2 of Part A)	4
Objectives	4
Project Activities, Milestones and Key Performance Indicators.....	6
Highlights and Issues	23
2. OTHER PROJECT MATERIAL (Conditions of Grant, clause 2.2 (b)-(e) of Part A)	27
3. ACQUITTAL REPORT (Conditions of Grant, clause 6.4 (a)-(d), clause 6.5 (a)-(b) of Part A)	28
DECLARATION	29

List of Tables

Table 1: Project objectives	4
Table 2: Project activities, milestones and KPIs	6
Table 3: Additional materials produced over the course of the project	27

1. PROJECT SUMMARY (Conditions of Grant, clause 2.2 of Part A)

Implement a mentoring program for women from low socio-economic status (LSES) backgrounds in regional areas in high school and university to help them realise their educational and career aspirations, with the aim of improving participation, retention and success in higher education in business and law.

Objectives

Indicate the extent to which the Project Objectives specified in clause 3 of Part A of the Conditions of Grant were met. Where obligations established in the Conditions of Grant were not met, please identify these and provide an explanation of circumstances and consequences.

Table 1: Project objectives

IDENTIFIED OBJECTIVE	EXTENT TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET
<p>(a) Implement an innovative mentoring program across four regional areas (Port Macquarie-Hastings, Greater Taree, Lower Hunter and Port Stephens), to provide high school students with insight to university, university students an opportunity to develop leadership skills, and both high school and university students insight to the professional opportunities available to graduates.</p>	<p>Over the period from May to November 2017 the EMPOWER mentoring program was delivered. The program connects female high school students and university students to industry professionals to inspire and inform young women about study and career opportunities available in business, commerce and law.</p> <p>By combining education and mentoring, (E + M = Power), this innovative leadership program aims to empower the participants to make informed decisions regarding their future career.</p> <p>EMPOWER aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give young women the confidence and strength to navigate and manage their own career development. • Create new networks and enable young women to increase their social capital. • Develop networking and business communication skills. • Expand workplace knowledge sets through experience. • Increase the level of attainment achieved in their studies to improve their future study and work outcomes. <p>It achieved these aims through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A combination of face to face and online experiences and interactions, between high school students, university students and Industry professionals. • Providing high school students with access to university resources, enabling them to become more familiar with the higher education environment. • Providing university students with the opportunity to play a dual role of both the Mentor and the Mentee, developing their leadership skills. • Providing Industry Mentors the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and support the next generation of business professionals.

IDENTIFIED OBJECTIVE	EXTENT TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using technology as a tool to support and enhance mentoring, as a mechanism to enable mentoring from a distance.
<p>(b) Foster a Community of Practice in each regional area, comprising a network of higher education representatives, and local teachers, parents, alumni, and professional women;</p>	<p>Informed by the work of Wenger (1998) and Webber (2016), the project team developed a strategy to foster a community of practice in each region. The development of the COP was undertaken through a three step approach, identified by Webber as “potential, forming and maturing” (2016, p20).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Potential: Initial meetings were held with schools and local government to garner support and interest in the program. We sought at least two schools in each community to participate in the program, to ensure government and community support. Forming: With the support of the existing connections of the school and local government, we commenced the recruitment of individuals from each of the regional areas who were willing to participate in and inform the activities of the program. Interest in and commitment to the program grew, as individuals put time and effort into the community. Maturing: With the initial pool and base of individuals in place, the project team wanted to expand the membership of the COP and looked to create a structure for the COPs that would enable continued and sustained engagement. Using the schools as the key connector in the community, and with the program in place and being delivered successfully in the school, we increased the number of people involved in the program which resulted in a more diverse community that then informed activity in the mentoring area.
<p>(c) A website and an app will be produced to house resources, including a research-informed online version of the mentoring program.</p>	<p>A literature review was conducted to inform best practice for online mentoring and the creation of online resources. The project team utilised the pilot program to test a variety of technologically-based resources, assets and approaches to facilitate the delivery of a mentoring program.</p> <p>One of the main learnings from our program delivery in 2017 has been gaining a better understanding of how young people interact with social media. This saw us change the way we engaged with program participants and focus more on the creation of a private online Facebook group, which can be accessed by mobile app or via the web, rather than a standalone app which risks not being used as it is not familiar to the target audience.</p> <p>Facebook group link: https://www.facebook.com/buslawuon/</p> <p>Website: www.newcastle.edu.au/EMPOWER</p> <p>The website provides the foundation for the program, and is the repository for the videos, the materials for the running of the program, and assists in the administration of the program. Both of these resources will be launched by 31 March 2018.</p>

Project Activities, Milestones and Key Performance Indicators

Below, please specify whether:

- all project Activities specified in Schedule 1 of the Conditions of Grant were completed
- all Project Milestones specified in Schedule 1 of the Conditions of Grant were completed
- all Key Performance Indicators specified in Schedule 1 of the Conditions of Grant were met.

Where obligations established in the Conditions of Grant were not met, identify these and provide an explanation of circumstances and consequences.

Table 2: Project activities, milestones and KPIs

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
Nov 2016	1.1 Project Team.	Completed	1.1 The Project Team is established, including recruitment of a Research Coordinator with skills appropriate to delivery of the Project.	The project team comprised a mix of Academic and Professional staff members from the Faculty of Business and Law, UoN. The initial project team included: Prof Johanna Macneil (CI) Ms Kate Ramzan-Levy (CI) Dr Tamara Young, Ms Sher Campbell and Ms Sarah Tooth. Upon confirmation of receiving the Grant the initial project team expanded to include Prof Lisa Toohey and Dr Paul Stolk. A Research Project Officer was appointed, Ms Kirrily Anderson and a Project Assistant, Ms Lauren Carlton joined the team in August.
	2.1 Literature review of evidence relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring programs for high school and university students (design, implementation and effectiveness); 	Completed	2.1.1 Evidence to inform the design of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the online version of the mentoring program; • the app; • the website design; and • online resources. 	The project team conducted an extensive review of literature with the key themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • best practice in mentoring • gender

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> aspirations of and barriers to higher education for LSES background high school students and regional high school students, especially women; and learning experiences of LSES background university students and regional university students, especially women. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the experiences of Low SES and regional and remote students Identity development <p>This review informed the development of the program in its entirety, including the face to face components and the online space.</p>
		Completed	2.1.2 Completion of a literature review suitable for inclusion in the Final Report.	The literature review is completed and is provided in the supporting evaluation report.
Nov 2016 – Dec 2016	<p>3.1 Initial liaison to begin fostering a Community of Practice with schools, local government, and local business in the following regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Macquarie–Hastings; Greater Taree; Lower Hunter; and Port Stephens. <p>The Community of Practice is intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide the high school students with opportunities to gain real–world insights and experiences through guest lectures, site visits and networking events; inform the online mentoring program; provide resources for the online mentoring program; and continue to support student aspiration attainment beyond 	Completed	3.1 The Research Coordinator visits each region, establishes contacts and begins planning for program delivery.	<p>December 2016 / February 2017.</p> <p>The project team members met with targeted schools in the program and local government to garner support and interest for the program in the regional areas of Greater Taree, Port Macquarie, Lower Hunter and Port Stephens.</p> <p>Once school commitment to the program was confirmed, the Research Coordinator worked with the schools to establish contacts and relationships with local business professionals, Industry groups and networks such as the business chambers within the region to secure industry professional involvement in the program.</p> <p>Industry professionals in the regions were then</p>

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	the life of the Project by coordinating the online mentoring program and providing real-world experiences to its users.			supported to participate in the program through a series of activities including the launch and finale events, and attending schools to deliver lunchtime career presentations and be involved in the establishment of a community of practice.
	3.2 Submission of application for ethics approval to the University of Newcastle.	Not required.	3.2 Application for ethics approval submitted in sufficient time for approval to be granted by the end of February 2017.	Early in the year, the Project team conducted a wide-ranging literature review and developed a series of research questions. Since they were exploratory rather than definitive research questions, it was decided to use the experience from the 2017 program to guide the design of a more structured questions and more formal research project, proposed for 2018.
Nov 2016 – Feb 2017	4.1 Identification of women professionals in business and law for video recording of interviews to include in the online mentoring program.	Completed	4.1 At least 12 women professionals commit to participating, including 6 who have either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> spent their pre-university life in a regional/remote area; or are currently working in a regional/remote area. 	The project had 25 people willing to provide their time to create their profile video. Due to availability and the need for the videos to be diverse in their representation, 20 videos interviews were undertaken: 19 Females 1 Male, 50% being from/working in a regional area. 12 were from a business/commerce background, 8 from the legal field.
Jan 2017 – Mar 2017	5.1 Engage external contractors to deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> video production; app design and construction. website design and construction; and 	Completed	5.1 Engagement of external contractors that can deliver services suitable for the online mentoring program.	Through the Community of Practice process, we connected with Midcoast Digital, based in Taree who filmed and edited the videos and set up the private online Facebook space (see 13.1.1).

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				Website design and management was provided internally, though the central service team. This was to ensure we are able to easily access and update the website content, ensuring it is an active and dynamic site. Using an internal resource also enables us have on hand and ongoing IT support.
Jan 2017 – May 2017	6.1 Mentoring program recruitment.	Completed	<p>6.1 Recruitment of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15–20 high school students from LSES backgrounds in each of the four target regions to be mentored; • 30–40 university students from LSES and regional backgrounds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mentor the high school - students; and - be mentored by the professional mentors; and • 30–40 professional mentors in total, from across the four regions to mentor the university students. 	<p>High School Students: 120 expressions of interest submissions were received from students at the participating High Schools. The numbers below reflect the number of students who saw the program through to completion.</p> <p>Total: 83 Port Stephens Region: 31 Irrawang High School: 17 Tomaree High School: 14</p> <p>Cessnock Region: 17 Cessnock High School: 11 Mount View High School: 6</p> <p>Taree Region: 14 Students Chatham High School: 14</p> <p>Port Macquarie Region: 21 Hastings Secondary College - Port Macquarie: 9 Hastings Secondary College - Westport: 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Students: 75 expressions of interest submissions were received from Faculty of Business and Law students at

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				<p>the University of Newcastle. Student participation in the program is determined by the number of mentors available to provide the 35 hour placement. The numbers below reflect the number of students who saw the program through to completion.</p> <p>55 University Students Domestic = 44 (Hunter, Upper Hunter and Mid-North Coast) International = 11 Studying Law = 22 Studying Business = 40</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Professionals: 50 expressions of interest were received from Newcastle and Hunter Region Industry Professionals. 25 expressions of interest were submitted from Regional mentors. <p>The numbers below reflect the number of students who saw the program through to completion. Please note: some industry professionals were able to support two students for placement.</p> <p>Total: 68 Newcastle: 50 Port Macquarie: 8 Taree: 10</p>
May 2017	7.1.1.1 Pre-mentoring program survey of	Completed	7.1.1-2 Surveys are distributed, completed and returned.	The participating students were requested to complete an online survey

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	<p>high school students to ascertain their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • previous exposure (if any) to university campuses and/or university life; • post-school plans and confidence in achieving them, including confidence/knowledge in accessing information to realise plans; • sources of advice their post-school plans; and • perception of self and university. 		Participation target = 85 per cent.	<p>prior to commencing the program.</p> <p>59 students completed the survey.</p> <p>Response rate: 71%</p> <p>Survey questions and survey analysis can be found in the evaluation report.</p>
	<p>7.1.2 Pre-mentoring program survey of university students to ascertain each student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perception of their leadership behaviour; and • expectations of the mentoring program. 	Completed	<p>7.1.1–2 Surveys are distributed, completed and returned.</p> <p>Participation target = 85 per cent.</p>	<p>Students were asked to complete an expression of interest to apply to be part of the program. As part of this process students were asked questions in regards to their motivations and interest in the program. This fulfilled the pre-survey component. Therefore, the response rate: 100%</p> <p>Results from the EOI responses can be found in the evaluation report.</p>
	7.2 Mentoring program launch.	Completed	<p>7.2 The mentoring program is launched at networking events, specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> one networking event in Newcastle for university students and professional mentors one networking event in each of the target regions for high school students and Community of Practice members, (e.g. teachers, parents, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 120 people (industry professionals, university students and high schools- Mount View, Cessnock Tomaree, Irrawang,) attended the Newcastle Launch of the program on 5 June. 40 people (industry professionals, university students and high schools - Hastings Secondary college both

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			chambers of commerce, government and business professionals, and Faculty of Business and Law representatives, including research team members).	campuses) attended the launch on 13 June in Port Macquarie. 25 people (industry professionals, university students and high schools – Chatham and Taree) attended the launch in Taree on 2 June.
	<p>7.3 Stakeholder interviews to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge of degree programs on offer, entry pathways to university and knowledge of resources to assist students, such as scholarships views on how the Faculty of Business and Law and stakeholders can work together to engage regional women from LSES backgrounds in business related higher education and succeed. 	Completed	<p>7.3 Interviews are conducted in each of the target regions with stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents (total target number across the four regions: 20) teachers (total target number across the four regions: 8) local government representatives (total target number across the four regions: 4) local business (total target number across the four regions: 12). 	<p>The project team utilised the establishment of the Community of Practice (COP) to inform our work and existing practice. The COP discussed the biggest organisational/management/workforce challenges for their regional area and opportunities for collaboration, both between the university and the community, and schools and organisations within their community. This discussion extended into the role online resources can play and how they can best support individuals in regional areas.</p> <p>COP meeting attendees and split of representation</p> <p>Port Macquarie: School: 4 Students: 2 Industry professionals: 3</p> <p>Taree School: 5 Students: 3 Industry professionals: 3 Parents: 4</p> <p>Port Stephens School: 3 Students: 7 Industry professionals: 3</p>

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				Cessnock Postponed twice due to lack of numbers.
May 2017 – Sept 2017	8.1 Mentoring program. The mentoring program will improve the participation, retention and success of women from regional areas and LSES backgrounds in higher education in business and law by providing participating high school and university students with additional resources experiences to help them realise their educational and career aspirations.	Completed	8.1.1 University students complete a 35-hour placement in their mentor's workplace, which provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure to the workplace and working with professionals, and • the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - build professional networks - source advice and support on career goals and objectives - gain greater career clarity and self-confidence with regard to career decision making 	55 university students were matched to 50 Industry Professionals and undertook their 35 hour placement within the workplace. Both the university students and the industry professionals were provided with a participant's manual to assist with the mentoring experience. One networking session was held in 2017.
		Completed	8.1.2 University students mentor high school students via Skype, phone and/or email (a minimum of three contacts), which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds the high school students' knowledge of university access and university life to facilitate informed decision-making; and • connects the high school students with university students from a similar background to demonstrate the feasibility of higher education. 	University student mentors were asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend a program launch and a program finale in a regional area • Respond to individual enquires and questions about their study/work experiences. • Assist regional high school students during a day visit to NeW Space. • Participate in the online component of the program – 4 sessions over 8 weeks. These sessions delivered by video conference were designed to stimulate conversation around women's career development and to learn more about

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				<p>university as a study option.</p> <p>In addition to this, regional Industry professionals visited the regional high schools as part of a face-to-face brown bag lunch series that happened in conjunction with the online mentoring sessions with university students.</p>
		Completed	<p>8.1.3 High school students complete at least one site visit to a local business or organisation, which provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an opportunity to experience a business and/or law profession workplace; and • insight to the activities and operations that take place in the visited workplace. 	<p>As the Faculty of Business and Law moved into a brand new building based in the CBD of Newcastle, we held two NeW Space on-campus visit days.</p> <p>The students toured the facility and attended lectures delivered by Academics on topics suitable for the audience. This day also included industry visits to local organisations (Sparke Helmore and Hunter Water), where the students met with and spoke to professionals working in the fields of business, commerce and law.</p> <p>Monday 21 August Hastings Secondary College (Port Macquarie and Westport) and Irrawang High School. 50 attendees including 5 university students, and staff.</p> <p>Friday 1 September Mount View High School, Tomaree High School, Cessnock High School and Chatham High School.</p>

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				50 attendees including 5 university students, and staff.
		Completed	8.1.4 High school and university students compile reflective journals, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • track and analyse progress; • identify gaps in knowledge and skills; and • reflect on ways to rectify these. 	Based on the work by Woerkom, Oerlemans & Bakker (2016) in their research “Strengths use and work engagement: a weekly diary study”. We utilised the 4 question 7 point scale they identified to assess actual strengths use behaviour. High School and university students were asked to complete a weekly survey, over a period of 5 weeks asking them to reflect on their strengths use.
May 2017 – Oct 2017	9.1 Collate and analyse survey, focus group, interview and reflective journal data to assist with developing the online mentoring program. The online mentoring program will provide a suite of online resources designed to improve the participation, retention and success of women from regional areas and LSES backgrounds in higher education in business and law by providing resources and archives of experience to help them realise their educational and career aspirations.	Completed	9.1 Project Team progressively collate and analyse Project data to inform the structure and content of the online mentoring program.	As an ongoing process throughout the program development, implementation and delivery, the team has regularly reflected on personal experiences and feedback from the participants in the program, reviewed data and sought out literature to inform and assist the development of the face to face and online component of the program. Key learnings in terms of the use of technology to navigate distance were built through experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to and willingness to use school technology varies for school to school. • The resources we develop need to be individually accessible on personal devices.

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				<p>This serves two purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students can access the resources in their own time and space, and not be limited by when activities occur in school. 2. It reduces the pressure on schools to provide the IT provided to run the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the COP's it was clear that individuals and organisations were very interested in participation but time was a factor. Providing opportunities through the online space to connect via video and text will enable greater opportunity for two-way communication.
Jun 2017 – Sept 2017	10.1 Filming of interviews with mentors for online mentoring program.	Completed	10.1 At least 12 interviews are filmed, resulting in videos suitable for inclusion in the online mentoring program.	20 interviews were completed, with 6 filmed on location in Taree and 14 filmed in Newcastle. The content will be used to drive activity to the website in 2018. The videos will be a combination of individual profiles and topic area videos.
Jul 2017 – Aug 2017	11.1 University student debriefing (focus group).	Completed	11.1 Project Team members facilitate a focus group for the university students to debrief them on their mentoring program experiences. Participation target = 85 per cent.	Students who responded to the post- evaluation survey were then asked to attend a focus group. This was held on Tuesday 21 November due to the time of the year, 3 university students participated, and were interviewed by an Academic external to the project.

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	11.2 Mentor and stakeholder debriefing (interviews),	Completed	11.2 Project Team members interview mentors and stakeholders by phone to debrief them on their mentoring program experiences. Participation target = 85 per cent.	<p>The project team decided that an online survey would provide further reach and enable respondents to complete the survey at a time that was convenient to them.</p> <p>Online Survey participation 13 Newcastle Mentors 3 Regional Mentors</p> <p>Key Findings The majority of mentors have benefitted from the program, and gained some form of professional development from their own participation. Examples of this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunity to network with other mentors, • reflection on own career development and practices • learning more about international culture, • gaining further confidence to share knowledge. <p>Suggested areas of improvement included more support for mentors in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional guidelines on what activities they can do with their mentee, • Provide more networking opportunities, • Improve on communication with mentors and checking in with progress.
Sept 2017	12.1 Mentoring program concludes with a graduation networking event at UON for	Completed	12.1 Graduation networking event is attended by high school students, teachers,	Newcastle Finale (incl Cessnock and Port Stephens regions) October 18

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	mentoring program participants.		university students, and professional mentors.	<p>Industry professionals, University students, Irrawang High school and Mount View High School. 60 attendees</p> <p>This event recognised the contribution from the industry professionals, and the completion of the program from the high school students. This event had a focus on entrepreneurial women, and was held as part of the global Women Entrepreneurship Week 2017.</p> <p>University students as part of their mentoring experience delivered 5 min presentations about the program to their peers and mentors.</p> <p>Regional Finales Taree – October 23 30 attendees Industry professionals, University students and Chatham High school</p> <p>Port Macquarie – November 27 32 attendees Industry professionals, University students and High schools Hastings Secondary college – Port Macquarie and Westport Campuses.</p> <p>One key highlight of this event was the schools supporting the students to find suitable business attire to wear to the finale event. This highlighted the need to consider how we could provide additional resources for both high</p>

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				<p>school and University students to be supported in their studies and their professional presentation. To enhance next years' experience we have ordered a range of resources such as document holders to address the need to look professional when applying for jobs/ attending work experience.</p> <p>These events recognised the contribution from the industry professionals, and the completion of the program from the high school students.</p> <p>To continue the relationship and connection with these schools, and in the interest of supporting student attainment we also provided Award sponsorship for prizes at their annual presentation days for both Legal Studies and Business Studies.</p>
	<p>12.2 Post-mentoring program survey of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high school students • university students. • to determine the impact of the program. 	Completed	<p>12.2 Surveys are distributed, completed and returned. Participation target = 65 per cent.</p>	<p>University and High School students were asked to complete an online survey regarding how their experiences in the program have impacted them, and how we could improve the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school students 54 Responses (64%) 85% of respondents reported that as a result of participating in the program, they have a greater

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				<p>awareness of the workplace. 88% of respondents have a greater understanding of the possible job opportunities that a University degree can give them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> University students. 36 Responses (65%) 97% of respondents have a greater understanding of the possible job opportunities that a University degree can give them. 86% of respondents said they have the skills to manage their career.
	12.3 Submission of reflective journals.	Completed	12.3 Reflective journals are submitted by high school and university students. Submission target = 45 per cent.	<p>The weekly survey completion proved difficult for the high school students, due to time and access to resources to complete. The online space will look to rectify this for future years.</p> <p>The University students regularly completed the survey.</p> <p>Journal Entry Week One: 48 Journal Entry Week Two: 45 Journal Entry Week Three: 40 Journal Entry Week Four: 37 Journal Entry Week Four: 44</p> <p>Submission target listed in 12.3 was originally based on a different submission process (handed in at completion of program,</p>

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
				<p>not on a weekly basis, (online), and as such cannot be compared.</p> <p>Results are provided in the evaluation report</p>
<p>Sept 2017 – Dec 2017</p>	<p>13.1 Website and app development.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>13.1.1 Development of a website and associated app which contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the online mentoring • associated resources for stakeholders. 	<p>Website and App development</p> <p>Learnings from our program delivery in 2017 have seen the direction of the app change to be a private online Facebook group, which can be accessed by mobile app or via the web.</p> <p>Reasons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key learning from school program delivery was the need for the students to use their personal devices to participate in the program. • It is a platform that the majority of participants (HS and Uni students and Industry professionals) access and we didn't want participants to have to access another app or resource. We want to be where they are, so the site/ Facebook group is active and dynamic. The use of the private online facebook page enables everyone to input content and for the content to not just be generated by the university. • Idea is that this is a space for information sharing and thought. • For those who cannot access Facebook, the supporting university

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
				<p>website will provide the same content. Facebook group link: https://www.facebook.com/buslawuon/</p> <p>Website www.newcastle.edu.au/E MPOWER</p> <p>The website provides the foundation for the program. It is the repository for the videos, the materials for the running of the program, and assists in the administration of the program.</p>
			13.1.2 The website and app are launched for public use.	<p>February/March 2018. As we used our experiences from this years' program to shape and inform the website, we would look to launch the website and app in 2018.</p> <p>We would use this launch to commence the 2018 Empower mentoring program.</p>
Oct 2017 – Dec 2017	14.1 Final Report and Acquittal Report.	Completed		14.1 Final Report and Acquittal Report submitted to the Department of Education and Training by 31 December 2017.

References

Emily Webber (2016) Building Successful Communities of Practice. UK: Drew London Ltd.

Etinne Wenger (1998) Communities of Practice, Learning, Meaning and Identity. UK: Cambridge Community Press.

Marianne van Woerkom, Wido Oerlemans & Arnold B. Bakker (2016) Strengths use and work engagement: a weekly diary study, European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 25:3, 384-397, DOI: 10.1080/1359432X.2015.1089862

Highlights and Issues

Provide a summary of highlights and achievements arising from your project (maximum half page).

The Empower mentoring program is designed to support young women to become stronger and more confident in regards to their individual development and career progression. The following examples highlight the ability of the program to achieve this.

- Through the connections for both high school students and university students to industry professionals, both high school and university students have reported increased or new opportunities for work experience, have obtained paid work with their mentor or mentor's employer, or have had the confidence to successfully apply for positions or take on work experience following the connections made in the program.
- Of the university students who completed the post-survey
 - 86% said they have now developed the skills to manage their career
 - 83% said they are more confident in the skills and knowledge they possess.
- Changes in confidence levels for University students are also reflected in the below comment "One of the most useful experiences was this week, when in video conference with the high school students we held a Q and A. The session made me realise how many answers I now have to the questions I was asking as a year 12 student. Which in turn, made me realise all the questions I currently hold in relation to 'What happens after university?' are answerable by someone else. Watching this cycle (with knowledge of its continuation) was very reassuring."
- Of the high school students who completed the post survey:
 - 71% of respondents believe that since participating in Empower they are better at identifying and stating their strengths. This can be reflected in the change in responses from the pre and post survey to the question 'I am able to use my strengths in lots of different ways'
 - 35% agreed or strongly agreed pre-survey and 67% agreed or strongly agreed in the post survey.
 - 71% of respondents confirmed that since participating in the program they have greater awareness of networks they can access for help and information.
- Through the establishment of the COP's, schools (and hence the students) have benefitted from a stronger more positive relationship with the local organisations and community, creating opportunities for collaboration within and external to this program.

Did the project lead to implementable outcomes? What changes will result at your institution/nationally? How is research being translated into practice? Are there activities resulting from this project that will be continued?

Across the three main parties participating in the pilot, high school students, university students and industry mentors, overall the experience was an extremely positive one that provided benefits to their individual and professional development.

Following the experimental and knowledge acquisition focus of the 2017 pilot, the project provided the research team with the opportunity to create a strong foundation in which to further develop an online mentoring program to complement face-to-face interactions and activities. The launch of the website and app in 2018 will provide the basis to further develop and create a best practice model and method for online/distance mentoring programs.

Additionally, the richness of the evaluation undertaken provides a solid body of evidence and knowledge to develop new and informative research projects. Of particular interest to the research team has been the concept of the development of a professional identity and the extent to which social learning can influence this development.

Did you undertake an evaluation of your project?

Yes No

The Empower mentoring program is designed to support young women to become stronger and more confident in regards to their individual development and career progression. The following examples highlight the ability of the program to achieve this.

- Through the connections for both high school students and university students to industry professionals, both high school and university students have reported increased or new opportunities for work experience, have obtained paid work with their mentor or mentor's employer, or have had the confidence to successfully apply for positions or take on work experience following the connections made in the program.
- Of the university students who completed the post-survey identified skills development and increased confidence as a result of the program
- Of the high school students who completed the post survey, they identified a greater ability to identify their strengths and have greater awareness of networks they can access for access help and information.
- Industry professionals' feedback and reflections reinforced the concept of reciprocity and the three key spheres of the program – networks, skill building and career navigation
- Through the establishment of the COP's, schools (and hence the students) have benefitted from a stronger more positive relationship with the local organisations and community, creating opportunities for collaboration within and external to this program.
- Respondents have provided wide-ranging feedback that we will review and adopt to improve the delivery of future iterations of the program.
- A substantial amount of data has been collected and reviewed to inform the development and creation of the online space and App.

Where applicable, indicate number of the following resulting from this project:

Student contacts	83 High school students 55 University Students From 8 high schools
Journal (or other publication) submissions	0
Conference Presentations	1
Websites developed	1 (www.newcastle.edu.au/EMPOWER)
Educational or marketing campaigns	0
Community organisations engaged	2
Organisations within a community engaged	70
Schools engaged	8
Parental/family contacts	10

Optional - If you included transformational/behavioural change KPIs in your EOI, please summarise outcomes here:

E.g. Percentage increase in enrolment	
E.g. Percentage increase in aspiration	

Describe any issues that occurred during the year and any mitigation strategies you implemented.

As the program was a pilot, and the project team undertook an experimental approach to its delivery, particularly in the digital delivery, naturally a few issues were experienced throughout the duration of the program. These can be placed into two main categories:

1. Technology
2. Managing stakeholders

Technology

Much of the high school and university student connection relied on technology- video conferencing and utilization of online resources such as Blackboard Collaborate Open Education. The difficulties we encountered included:

- We were working with two different technological platforms (DET and university), and they didn't always connect with each other which resulted in some sessions being postponed or cancelled. To mitigate this, we did arrange additional make-up sessions where possible.
- Varied access to suitable rooms/ venues/ technology in schools
- The need for our university students to be physically here in the building, instead of connected in online anywhere limited the number of students available to participate in the weekly.
- The structured nature meant the participants experienced the program when it worked for the school and the uni, not necessarily when it worked for them.

These experiences have clearly informed the way forward for the project in terms of technology usage. We will expect all participants to BYO device, (and with the use of Facebook, means students can utilise their mobile phones) which will create greater flexibility for all, and enable the connections to occur more readily in formal and informal learning and social situations, and at a time that suits the participants.

Managing Stakeholders

Members on the project team had previous experience managing the connection between the university students and the Industry professionals, having managed a similar program “Lucy”, for the previous 10 years. We had the highest number of university students and industry mentors involved in the program to date. This required us to balance existing expectations whilst growing the program. We then also added the third stakeholder of schools/school students into the mix.

Commencing the program had its challenges as it was dependant of the number of each stakeholders, i.e. the number of university students involved was determined by the number of industry mentors we could match them to. There were quite a few logistical issues to manage as the high schools were located in regional areas up to three hours from the campus, which required us to develop relationships with school students and teachers and balance contact with both face-to-face and by distance. The team worked to create processes and procedures that enabled the program to run as smoothly as possible given the size and resources available to coordinate the program. The team regularly reflected on their work and reviewed their processes to ensure the future experience will continue to improve.

2. OTHER PROJECT MATERIAL (Conditions of Grant, clause 2.2 (b)-(e) of Part A)

Table 3: Additional materials produced over the course of the project

TYPE	AUTHOR	DATE OF PUBLICATION	PUBLICATION DETAILS
E.g. Journal article; conference paper; website; pamphlet, etc.			Name of journal; conference title and date; website URL, etc.
Website	Kirrily Anderson	April 2017	www.newcastle.edu.au/EMPOWER
Facebook online space	Kirrily Anderson	November 2017	https://www.facebook.com/buslawuon/
Participants Manual	Project team	May 2017	Empower Mentoring Program Participants Manual
Conference Presentation	Kate Ramzan-Levy	17-20 September 2017	TEMC 2017, Melbourne E+M=POWER, combining Education and Mentoring to enhance women's leadership and career development.

3. ACQUITTAL REPORT (Conditions of Grant, clause 6.4 (a)-(d), clause 6.5 (a)-(b) of Part A)

Have you fully expended the Grant Funds provided under the Conditions of Grant?

Yes No

If the answer is No, please specify:

- *the amount of funds remaining: \$4,011.43*
- *the reason for this underspend: The decision to adjust plans in regards to the app (utilising the existing social media platforms) and having the website development and management provided in-house negated these budgeted costs.*

Ensure that the completed Acquittal Report template is signed by an appropriate university officer and attached to this Final Report.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE - Unspent 2016 National Priorities Pool Grant Funds*

- *Grant recipients must fully expend these 2016 National Priorities Pool funds in the project period for which the grant is made and report on this expenditure to the Commonwealth, including the amount of any unspent funds.*
- *If a provider fails to spend the full amount granted it in respect of a year, the unspent funds may be recovered by the Commonwealth.*

DECLARATION

I declare that:

- I am authorised by the university to sign this Declaration on its behalf, and
- to the best of my knowledge, the information that I have provided in the **Final Report** and **Acquittal Report** for the HEPPP 2016 National Priorities Pool project: *Mentoring Women from Regional Australia to Realise their Educational and Career Aspirations in Business & Law* is true, correct and accurate in all particulars.

I understand that:

- The provision of false or misleading information or the making of false or misleading statements to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)*.
- If any actual or potential conflict of interest arises, I must notify the Commonwealth immediately in writing of the facts giving rise to the actual or potential conflict of interest and to take such steps as the Commonwealth may require so as to resolve or otherwise deal with any conflict of interest that may arise.

I agree to publication of the Final Report on the Department of Education and Training website, once accepted by the department.

Title	Professor
Name	Darrell Evans
Position	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Signature	