

Understanding how regionality and socioeconomic status intersect with disability [HEP 160080]

December 2016 to 4 May 2018

Professor Julia Coyle

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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

Understanding how regionality and socioeconomic status intersect with disability [HEP 1600080]

December 2016 to 4 May 2018

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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 **4 May 2018**.

If you require additional guidance or clarification, please contact us at equity@education.gov.au.

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

Objectives

Table 1: Project objectives

IDENTIFIED OBJECTIVE	EXTENT TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVE WAS MET
Build an evidence base through research on decisions of people with disability from low socio-economic backgrounds associated with access to and participation in higher education, including the decision to delay university study until later in life.	Objective was met. Evidenced by attached Research Report.
Disseminate these research findings on barriers, levers, and influences regarding higher education.	Objective was met and is currently ongoing. Evidenced by attached Research Report and attached conference and journal submission strategy detailed in section 2 of this report.
Provide recommendations on ways in which the higher education sector can improve low current levels of higher education access and participation for regional people with disabilities.	Objective was met. Evidenced by attached Research Report which includes recommendations to students, stakeholders around students, university staff and government.

Project Activities, Milestones and Key Performance Indicators

Please note that variations to Conditions of the Grant were approved 15 August 2017 and all activities and milestones were completed, with key performance indicators met.

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	1.0 Face-to-face meeting 1: Project inception	Completed	1.0 Terms of Reference established for Reference Group 1.0.1 Face to face project inception meeting held between Reference Group and Research	The terms of reference for the reference group was established and a project group inception meeting took place on November 17 2016.
Nov – Dec 2016	2.0 Recruit Project Manager	Completed	2.0 A Project Manager with the knowledge, skills and experience to successfully deliver the Project is appointed by 15 December 2016.	The project manager was recruited in December 2016 and commenced work on the project in January 2017.

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
Dec 2016 – Feb 2017	3.0 Application to each universities Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for ethics approval	Completed	3.0 Ethics approval (HRECs) submitted by 15 December 2016.	Approval from CSU HREC was gained 21 March 2017 with partner university approval shortly afterwards.
Feb – Apr 2017	4.0 Develop research sampling method 4.1 Develop and adapt survey instruments	Completed	4.0 Research sampling method developed and approved by steering committee. 4.1 Survey instrument developed and approved by steering committee.	Research sampling method and instrument was approved by Reference Group
Apr – May 2017	5.0 Research associates from each site to undertake quantitative fieldwork	Completed	5.0 Quantitative fieldwork with university students is completed by all participating universities by 30 April 2017.	Survey closed 14 May 2017.
May – Jul 2017	6.0 Data analysis Analysis of qualitative data will take place concurrent with and subsequent to data collection	Completed	6.0 Initial analysis of quantitative data complete by 17 July 2017 to inform qualitative data collection.	Qualitative analysis informed by survey phase. Qualitative analysis performed in three phases (see research report). The first phase consisted of concurrent data collection and analysis. All three populations were recruited to the research, however difficulty was encountered recruiting school students and community members and additional recruitment strategies were used. Data collection was between July and December 2017.
Jul – Aug 2017	7.0 Research associates from each site to undertake qualitative fieldwork with the following groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 8–10 students from partner schools associated with participating universities' aspiration programs Students recruited from those engaging 	Completed	7.0 All qualitative data collection is completed by all participating universities by 31 August 2017. 7.0.1 Research compiled from sufficient numbers to allow for analysis, as determined by Hermeneutic methodology and principles of saturation.	As above.

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
	<p>with the universities' disability services, with two subgroups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o recent school leavers; and o non-recent school leavers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mature people not currently studying recruited through community disability groups. 		<p>Samples to be collected from each of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 8–10 students • Recent school leavers (university students) • Non-recent school leavers (university students) • Mature people not currently studying. 	
Jan 2018	<p>8.0 Face-to-face meeting 2: Analysis workshop All quantitative and qualitative data is analysed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify aspiration levers and barriers • Identify career levers and barriers • Build knowledge on decision making associated with participating in university study • Establish potential solutions or focal points for higher education providers 	Completed	<p>8.0 Final synthesis and development of discussion and recommendations conducted by the researchers, with endpoints discussed in the reference group.</p> <p>8.0.1 Final analysis approved by steering committee.</p>	<p>Synthesis meeting was held 6 March 2018 to discuss recommendations. Final analysis was approved by Reference group on 16 April 2018.</p>
Feb 2018	<p>9.0 Develop recommendations on improving aspiration and participation among students from low SES backgrounds living in regional and remote areas with disability.</p>	Completed	<p>9.0 Recommendations developed for all stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University staff and equity practitioners • School staff- including careers advisors as well as teachers • Parents • Community members • University students • Government 	See research report.
Apr 2018	<p>10.0 Development and delivery of Final Report and Acquittal Report.</p>	Completed	<p>10.0 Final Report and Acquittal Report are submitted to the Department of Education and Training by 30 April 2018</p>	Met
Apr 2018	<p>11.0 Development of conference and journal paper submission</p>	Completed	<p>11.0 Conference and journal submission</p>	Met, see journal and conference submission strategy.

TIME FRAME	PLANNED ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOME
	strategy to disseminate Project outcomes and recommendations.		strategy complete by 30 April 2018.	
Apr 2018	12.0 Development of guidelines for enhancing aspirations of low SES regional students with disability (aspirations programs).	Completed	12.0 Guidelines complete by 30 April 2018. 12.0.1 Dissemination via material lodged on partner websites, guideline summary for schools, and universities.	Met, see journal and conference submission strategy.

Highlights and Issues

The program of research used an exploratory mixed method approach to explore the experiences of people with disability in higher education across five regional universities.

A number of key findings were identified, including:

- That disability experience was not found to differ with regionality. However, participants reported difficult transition experiences from high school to university settings. When this finding is coupled with lower participation rates among regional students with disability it indicates that barriers to entry and participation still remain.
- The program of research identified that poverty and disability were found to impact cumulatively on students with disability. The prospect of gaining employment as a solution to financial stress is not a clear or easy option for students with disability.
- Managing and negotiating access to education was a challenge students with disability experienced above the existing challenges students face with University study. This additional challenge was compounded by a predominantly reactive model to their learning needs adopted by the universities.
- Meeting challenges associated with accessing education required high levels of agency that some students did not yet possess. Students with disability recognised the importance of developing their skills in this respect alongside other skills and expertise gained through University study. Some sought guides or facilitators to assist them in their planning and to develop a greater sense of agency.

Recommendations and guidelines have been developed stemming from the program of research to inform people with disability, stakeholders around them, universities and government.

A journal and conference submission strategy has been developed (see below) and recommendations made for further research.

Did you undertake an evaluation of your project?

Yes No

Please see attached Research Report for a detailed description and evaluation of the program of research.

The program of research involved 2,667 invitations to complete a survey distributed via email to university students with disability. 541 respondents completed the survey. In addition, 48 university students with disability, 15 community members with disability and 9 school students with disability were interviewed.

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
Research report	Professor Julia Coyle Dr Kate Freire Professor Denise Wood Dr Clare Wilding Ms Davina Taylor Associate Professor Jenene Burke Dr Rahul Ganguly Mr Liam Downing Ms Larissa Siliézar	Apr 2018	Understanding how regionality and socioeconomic status intersect with disability

Conference and journal submission strategy

Dissemination of research report

1. Research report entitled: The Influence of Disability, Socioeconomic Status and Regionality on Higher Education Access and Participation
2. Guideline document: Practical advice for stakeholders working with students with disability

Journal Submission Strategy

Journals:

- Disability and Society
- HERDSA journal HERD
- Research into Higher Education

Papers (to be completed in mid-late 2018):

1. Survey paper.
2. Qualitative paper focusing on a particular theme from discussion section of report.
3. Qualitative paper focusing on a particular theme from discussion section of report.
4. Qualitative methodology piece.

Non peer reviewed piece:

- The Conversation
- The Australian Education section

Possible Conference Presentations

1. Universities Australia Conference (February 2019)
2. STARS Conference (June/July 2019)

3. EPHEA Conference (November 2019), University of Wollongong.
4. Pathways Conference (Dec 2018)

Other Presentations

1. ADCET Webinar

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

**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: *Understanding how regionality and socioeconomic status intersect with disability [HEP 1600080]* 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	Understanding how regionality and socioeconomic status intersect with disability [HEP 1600080]
Name	Professor Toni Downes
Position	Chief Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor)
Signature	Acting Vice-Chancellor Charles Sturt University