

Raising aspiration and achievement in regional schools through innovative online modules

10 November 2016 to 31 March 2018

Scott Nichols, University of Canberra

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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

Raising aspiration and achievement in regional schools through innovative online modules

10 November 2016 to 31 March 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 **28 February 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

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
a) develop and deliver a series of literacy, numeracy, assignment writing and time-management modules to break down barriers to higher education for regional students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds	A series of online modules to provide 'just-in-time' skills, resources, and opportunities for learning were developed and delivered including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Achievement • Time management • Career planning • University familiarisation • 'Aspiration' modules relate to the provision of careers advice as they encourage students to first identify what skills or attributes they feel they possess, research careers they are potentially interested in, and investigate various pathways available to help them achieve their goals.
b) make these modules available online to schools in regional NSW and Queensland that have been identified as having large cohorts of students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds enrolled	The series of modules was made available online to 26 schools in regional NSW and 10 schools in Queensland that have been identified as having large cohorts of students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds enrolled.
c) undertake supplementary visits to the schools as part of this pilot project with approximately 40 schools	In NSW & Qld, 97 school visits were made with 129 individual face-to-face classroom visits by Outreach Officers in 36 schools.

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 MILESTONES & ACTIVITIES	PROJECT ACTIVITIES & MILESTONES COMPLETED	IDENTIFIED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OUTCOMES
Oct 2016 – Nov 2016	Establish Project Team.	<p>UC achieved this milestone.</p> <p>The Project Partner, TAFE Queensland did not employ Outreach Officers until June 2017.</p>	Project Team is established, including engagement of Outreach Officers and an Educational Designer with skills appropriate to delivery of the Project.	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Project team is established at UC. Due to the tight timeline and the difficulty finding an Educational Designer with the appropriate skills, a Project Officer was employed to assist with the module design and implementation, including the distribution of the modules through the digital learning platform, Canvas Instructure.</p> <p>The Outreach Officers were confirmed through TAFE Qld in June 2017.</p>
	1.2 Development of teacher and student surveys.	Teacher and student surveys developed.	<p>1.2 Surveys are finalised in anticipation of submission of applications for ethics approval.</p> <p>1.2.1 The surveys will be designed to determine the success of modules in how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation • develop understanding of higher education • positively influence students' views of university. 	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Surveys were developed for completion by students and teachers. Surveys were designed to determine the success of the modules in how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation • Develop understanding of higher education • Positively influence students' views of university <p>Ethics approval was not sought due to the loss of the Academic Project Lead. The replacement Project Lead informed the Department of this change and advised that there would not be an associated research paper, presentation or article produced. The requested change was accepted by the Department and it was advised that there would be no changes necessary to the CoG.</p>

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Oct 2016 – Jan 2017	<p>2.1 Development of six to seven online modules, which provide information and support to Years 9–12 students on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aspiration towards higher education (2–3 modules) • achievement to support higher education entry (4 modules). 	<p>Seven online modules developed in total: 3 Aspiration Raising modules; 4 Achievement modules to support higher education entry.</p>	<p>2.1 The modules are developed in time for start of delivery in Term 1 2017</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The following modules were successfully developed for timely delivery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Who Am I? Reflect on your achievements, interests and unique qualities. • Module 2: What do I want? Explore your career options. • Module 3: How Do I Get There? Change the way you see higher education and create your own goal setting plan. <div data-bbox="1400 611 1883 887" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Image 1: Image from raising aspirations modules</p> <p>The three Aspiration raising modules include videos, text, interactive activities and quizzes. They have been designed to be undertaken independently, or in the classroom, and can also be shared with families. <i>Module 1 Who am I?</i> allowed students to explore their individual skills, attributes and interests, and asked students to create a personal mission statement. <i>Module 2: What do I want?</i> Provided the opportunity to explore different career opportunities aligned to their interests identified in Module 1. Using a career tool, students are given randomly selected jobs and asked to identify why they would or would not like to have this job. Students can then select a desired career, and give career advice to a friend based upon their skills, values and interests. In <i>Module 3: How Do I Get There?</i> Students created a career action plan outlining short, medium and longer-term actions to allow</p>

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				<p>them to plan their trajectory into their chosen career. Student feedback indicated that this was a key feature that was engaging and useful, with many students printing out their templates for discussion and future reference.</p> <p>The following four Achievement modules were developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module 1: Essay writing • Module 2: Procrastination • Module 3: Time Management • Module 4: University 101 <p>The Achievement modules include videos, text, interactive activities and quizzes. They have been designed to be undertaken independently, or in the classroom, and can also be shared with families. <i>Module 4: University 101</i> incorporates videos of real UC students (some of whom who would have accompanied Outreach Officers to visits in NSW schools) describing some of the features of their life as university students. Videos covered social life at university (such as playing sport, joining clubs or societies, and making friends), living on campus, studying and part time work, and student services that can be accessed on campus. Feedback from students indicated that these videos were central to demystifying university and providing an accessible and genuine view of what life is like as a university student.</p> <p>Modules were successfully completed ahead of each term's delivery which proved to be ideal timing as modifications could be made to the modules and delivery as necessary based on feedback from students and teachers in pilot schools.</p> <p>An initial pilot delivery of Module 1 commenced in Term 1 2017 in two schools in NSW. The students and teachers provided invaluable feedback which allowed the design of Module 1 to be finalised, and</p>

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				successive modules to be designed with the needs of students and teachers more fully incorporated.
Nov 2016 – Mar 2017	<p>3.1 Applications for ethics approval submitted to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Canberra • State Education Research Applications Process (NSW) • OLD Department of Education and Training. 	Ethics approval not sought.	3.1 Applications are submitted in sufficient time for approval to be granted by 31 January 2017 in at least NSW, and approval in Queensland by the start of Term 2.	Ethics approval not sought (see comment in 1.2 for further information).
Feb 2017 – Apr 2017	<p>4.1 Liaison with schools to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gauge interest in participating in piloting the modules, and • organise visits by the Outreach Officers 	Liaison with schools to seek interest in participating in pilot project began in NSW by UC Outreach Officers.	<p>4.1 Schools agree to visits by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UC Outreach Officers (25 schools in regional NSW) • TAFE Queensland Outreach Officers (15 schools in northern Queensland). 	<p>Completed.</p> <p>UC Outreach Officers successfully scheduled visits with 26 schools in regional NSW, largely utilising the strong partnerships that had been developed through Aspire UC, the University’s flagship Outreach Program operating since 2010. Schools were contacted via email with follow up phone calls as necessary, and showed strong interest in participating in the program.</p> <p>TAFE Queensland did not have Outreach Officers in place until June 2017. This reduced timeframe, and the absence of a strong schools’ network as cultivated by UC, resulted in TAFE Queensland delivering to 10 schools rather than the target of 15 provided by the CoG. In June/July many schools were not able to participate as their school calendars were already full.</p> <p>To maximise the total number of students reached in the north, the Outreach Officer in Townsville delivered the Raising Aspirations program to his TAFE Queensland Vocational Education classes. The</p>

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				<p>Outreach Officer in Cairns worked methodically over a sustained period to try to increase the total number of schools participating in the program.</p> <p>Outreach Officers from TAFE Queensland contacted schools via email with follow up phone calls, however, some schools had already completed programs they felt were similar; and although some teachers were receptive, school administration was unable to provide opportunity for classroom delivery. The program delivery would have benefitted from an increased program timeframe, or the earlier involvement of TAFE Queensland in the project.</p> <p>School communication with both UC and TAFE Queensland was ongoing throughout the year. For curriculum and scheduling reasons, some schools requested their sessions earlier in the year, other schools required later visits. These were managed on a case-by-case basis to fit in with the staffing, time, and resource constraints of the Outreach Officers to ensure all schools could participate in, and benefit from the Raising Aspirations program.</p>
Feb 2017 – Apr 2017	<p>5.1 First school visit series which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach Officers piloting online modules in-class at targeted schools. 	NSW school visits planned for Terms 2, 3, 4.	<p>5.1 The Outreach Officers visit approximately 90 per cent of the 40 targeted schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach Officers deliver aspiration and achievement sessions in-class in participating schools to pilot the modules. • Outreach Officers recommend adjustments to improve accessibility 	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Module 1 was piloted in two NSW schools in Term 1. This was chosen to road-test the design, usability, and technology featured in the module design before delivering to a broader number of schools. This pilot process allowed the Outreach Officers to gain valuable feedback from teachers and students to implement design improvements before the broader delivery program.</p> <p>Due to school calendars and scheduling, most of the schools chose to participate in the program from Term 2 onwards. Some technical issues were detected, however, mainly to do with poor internet connectivity in rural areas. Activities such as the ‘Career wheel’ was slow to work when multiple students were accessing at the same time. This glitch</p>

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			<p>and effectiveness of modules based on feedback.</p>	<p>was fixed immediately by the UC team utilising an alternative platform for the activity.</p> <p>In some instances, schools did not have enough computers for each student and students had to share which was not ideal for them completing individualised tasks. In these situations, contingency plans were utilised which included group sessions and independent paper-based tasks accompanied by class discussions led by Outreach Officers. These measures ensured that all students still gained the benefit of participating in the program.</p> <p>To improve accessibility and effectiveness of the modules, the Outreach Officers determined that rather than having students select their own passwords as originally planned, that passwords would need to be provided to all students. As such, Outreach Officers provided a paper record of all passwords for each session to facilitate faster log in time and alleviate the difficulty of forgotten passwords in the future.</p> <p>Technical difficulties and how they were overcome is further explored on page 24.</p>
Mar 2017 – May 2017	6.1 Online modules made available to schools for delivery to students.	Online modules Introduced to students in targeted schools through UC Outreach Officers.	<p>6.1.1 The online modules are made available to at least 95 per cent (n = 38) of the expected 40 participating schools by 31 May 2017.</p> <p>6.1.2 The participating schools deliver the online modules to students in Years 9–12. Modules delivered to at least one</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Online modules were made available to schools via the Outreach Officers.</p> <p>The scheduling of in-school visits is constrained by the availability of Outreach Officers and corresponding availability of schools. The time and distance required to travel to several of the NSW schools means two staff are required on all trips, the availability of Outreach Officers at UC and TAFE Qld, and the limited free time in school timetables, resulted in school visits being scheduled throughout 2017. The Modules were available to schools in this time, however most schools chose to wait until the Outreach Officers were available to</p>

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			class in each school (n="20).	<p>support the delivery of the Modules in each class. By 31 May 2017, UC Outreach Officers has delivered sessions in 13 schools of the participating 26 in NSW. Up to 3 visits were completed in each of the 26 participating NSW schools by 30 November 2017.</p> <p>Outreach Officers delivered the Modules to between one and three classes in each school, dependent upon school availability.</p> <p>TAFE Qld Outreach Officers commenced school delivery in August 2017, and completed delivery 30 November 2017.</p>
May 2017 – Jul 2017	7.1 Second school visit series and interim evaluations.	<p>UC Outreach Officers continue implementing modules with students in participating schools.</p> <p>TAFE Qld Outreach Officers liaise with schools to begin piloting modules in participating schools.</p>	<p>7.1 The Outreach Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visit at least 90 per cent of the participating schools, and • conduct evaluations with at least 80 per cent of the participating schools. <p>7.2 The interim evaluation will examine the success of modules in how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation • develop understanding of higher education 	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The in-school visits continued during this period. This period incorporates school holidays, which provides further constraints on the scheduling of in-school visits, as many schools are unavailable in the last week before school holidays and the first week back from holidays.</p> <p>By the end of July, at least one in-class session had been completed in 20 out of 26 participating NSW schools (representing 76 percent of participating NSW schools), and four schools had completed their second in-class session.</p> <p>Interim evaluations were conducted in all in-class sessions (100 percent of sessions). The evaluations sought to examine the success of modules in how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation • develop understanding of higher education <p>Interim evaluations provided key feedback in module design and content. Responding to a 5-point scale, participating students indicated a high level of agreement with the following statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I found the module fun and engaging • I liked the modules design

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are delivered to at least 95 per cent of the targeted schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have a better understanding of higher education I am thinking more about university after today's session <p>Further information regarding evaluation data is provided in the <i>Evaluations</i> section, p18.</p>
Jul 2017 – Aug 2017	8.1 Online modules updated.	Online modules updated as necessary by UC team.	8.1 The online modules are updated based on revisions recommended by participating schools for future use post-project.	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The modules were updated in accordance with feedback received from students, Careers Advisors and UC/TAFE Qld Outreach Officers. For example, a number of amendments were made to the content of the Career Planning template based on feedback from Careers Advisors. Modifications could be made to the online content as well as to the face-to-face delivery, scaffolding of activities and instructions provided to students.</p> <p>In response to several technical issues and inconsistent access to computers in some schools, Outreach Officers prepared a series of paper-based worksheets to complement the online activities, and USBs containing the videos and other content were taken to school sessions as a contingency plan for technical issues in the classrooms. This ensured that all students could participate in the program and the program was delivered to a consistently high standard across variable conditions.</p> <p>Several schools expressed interest in using the Raising Aspirations Modules as a future resource. One school suggested holding a regional training session for several local schools to provide professional development for teachers in accessing and utilising the modules for students, independent of Outreach Officers. This idea is being explored by UC Widening Participation as a priority for 2018.</p>

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Aug 2017 – Nov 2017	<p>9.1 Data input and analysis to determine teacher and students views of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — success of modules in appealing to students through innovative technology and presentation — success of modules in developing understanding of higher education — success of modules in positively influencing students' views of university — success in raising aspirations for higher education. 	Data input from teacher and student responses is ongoing.	<p>9.1 Evaluations completed for 80 per cent of participating schools (minimum one class per school)</p> <p>9.2 Data analysis completed</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>Teacher and student evaluations completed for 95 percent of participating schools.</p> <p>A delayed start in appointing a Project Team at TAFE Queensland and scheduling delivery of modules in Queensland schools, resulted in a two-month extension to the timeframe for the school visits and module revisions. As such, the face-to-face component continued through until December with final evaluations being conducted followed by data input and analysis.</p> <p>Data was obtained from 2706 students in 36 schools. Evaluation findings are reported in detail in <i>Section 2: Evaluations</i>.</p> <p>In summary, students reported high levels of enjoyment with the Modules and found them to be engaging, informative, and well designed.</p> <p>Several student comments are provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “This module really helps me gain more understanding of what I want to do when I leave high school”. Student, Ulladulla High School • “This module is really helpful, it helps break down and explain an overwhelming decision (for our future career and uni choices)”. Student, Griffith High School • “It was a fun and engaging program which helps me think about what I want to do after year 12”. Student, Cootamundra High School
Sep 2017 – Oct 2017	10.1 Third school visit series and final evaluations.	Third school visits and final evaluations began.	<p>10.1 The Outreach Officers:</p> <p>Visit at least 90 per cent of the participating schools, and conduct</p>	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The University of Canberra visited 100% of the 26 schools at least once by the end of October with 11 having received their third and final visit.</p>

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			<p>evaluations with at least 80% of the participating schools (n=1-80 students and 30 teachers).</p>	<p>By the end of delivery in November, 67 school visits were completed in 26 schools.</p> <p>By the end of October, TAFE Queensland (TQ) had delivered 25 individual sessions in 10 schools.</p> <p>By the end of delivery in November, 30 individual sessions were delivered in 10 schools.</p> <p>By the end of October TQ visited 100% of participating schools with most having received their third and final session.</p> <p>By the end of October, UC and TQ had visited 35 out of a total of 36 participating schools = 97%.</p> <p>Upon conclusion of the program, all participating students and supervising teachers had been invited to complete evaluations. Student evaluations were used to determine the success of the modules in how they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation. • Develop understanding of higher education. <p>Teacher evaluations were used to examine the success of the Raising Aspirations program in how it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influences students' belief that university might be achievable. • Has a positive impact on students. • Enables students to benefit using online modules.

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				<p>Overall, both teachers and students reported positive feedback on the program. Teachers responses to the Raising Aspirations project were overwhelmingly positive.</p> <p>Evaluation findings are reported in detail in the <i>Evaluation section p. 18.</i></p>
Dec 2017	11.1 Final Report and Acquittal Report.	An extension for the Final Report and Acquittal report to be submitted by 28/02/18 was granted by the Department.	11.1 Final Report and Acquittal Report are submitted to the Department of Education and Training by 28/02/18.	<p>Completed.</p> <p>An extension for submission of the Final Report and Acquittal was granted by the Department until 28/02/18. The extension was sought as the Project experienced a number of delays to the timeframe for the school visits and module revisions. As such, the face-to-face component continued through until the end of November with final evaluations being conducted followed by data input and analysis.</p> <p>As the Project Period for this Project extends until 31 March 2018, the request for an extension was granted with no variation to the CoG.</p>

Highlights and Issues

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

The University of Canberra (UC) partnered with TAFE Queensland to deliver the Raising Aspirations program to students in Years 9-12 in secondary schools located in low SES regional areas of northern Queensland and NSW. Students had access to seven online modules, three aspiration building modules titled *Raising Aspirations*, and four achievement based modules titled *Study Skills*. The *Raising Aspirations* modules provide students with opportunities to explore who they are, what they want for their futures, and how to get there. The *Study Skills* modules provide targeted support for essay writing, practical and implementable strategies for avoiding procrastination, how to develop better time management, and general information about university and university life.

The modules listed above have been electronically packaged for delivery to schools in 2018. UC will provide school staff with professional development in how to use the modules to ensure the ongoing success of Raising Aspirations.

The modules themselves are unique, innovative and high quality, providing 'just-in-time' information for students who face limited access to information about higher education and career opportunities due to their geographical location and background. Embedding real students' stories into the module content and having the students engage with their journey helps high school students to familiarise themselves with post-school study options, potential career paths and opportunities they may otherwise not be aware of.

The Raising Aspirations Project was delivered to 36 schools in regional New South Wales and northern Queensland. 97 school visits were made with 159 individual face-to-face classroom engagements by Outreach Officers.

Overall, students reported enjoyment of the program and found it beneficial in learning more about how their personal interests and attributes can lead to post-school study and assist them to navigate their future career pathways.

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?

- Schools have indicated their desire for the Raising Aspirations modules to be made available in the future, highlighting the positive outcomes experienced through the project.
- UC to deliver introductory training sessions for NSW Careers Advisors in 2018 to encourage continued use of the modules.
- Schools will continue using the online modules to complement students' learning and to aid in post-school pathway navigating and career planning.
- The modules provide a great deal of scope for schools to tailor for the needs of students.
- Modules do not need to be completed in order. Students can log into the modules and choose various components depending on their needs and the time they have to allocate to the tasks.

- UC investigating the possibility of accreditation of modules in NSW.

Did you undertake an evaluation of your project?

Yes No

Please summarise the findings and attach the evaluation report.

All aspects of the Raising Aspirations Project were evaluated by both participating students and supervising teachers.

Data was collected from 2706 students and 95 teachers from 36 schools. Participants were selected by each of the schools' Career Advisors and the majority (92%) were in Year 9 and 10. Of those students who participated in the Modules and completed the evaluations, 330 students (12%) identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The pilot project was delivered to 1330 male students and 1269 female students with 107 students who did not indicate gender.

Student surveys were designed to determine the success of the modules in how they:

- Appeal to students through innovative technology and presentation.
- Develop understanding of higher education.
- Positively influence students' views of university.



Image 2: Mulwaree High School students completing a module with a UC Aspirations Agent

Overall, both teachers and students reported positive feedback on the program. Students reported high levels of enjoyment with the Modules and found them to be engaging, informative, and well designed. Teachers indicated that they saw the benefit of using online modules, that the content of these modules was varied, engaging, and age appropriate, and that the Raising Aspirations program had a positive impact on students.

Student feedback

Using a 5-point scale, students who undertook the Raising Aspirations program were asked a series of post-program questions to determine the success of the Modules.

In Figure 1 below, the majority of participants report that the Modules appealed to students through the design and presentation, by agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, 'I found the Modules to be fun and engaging'.

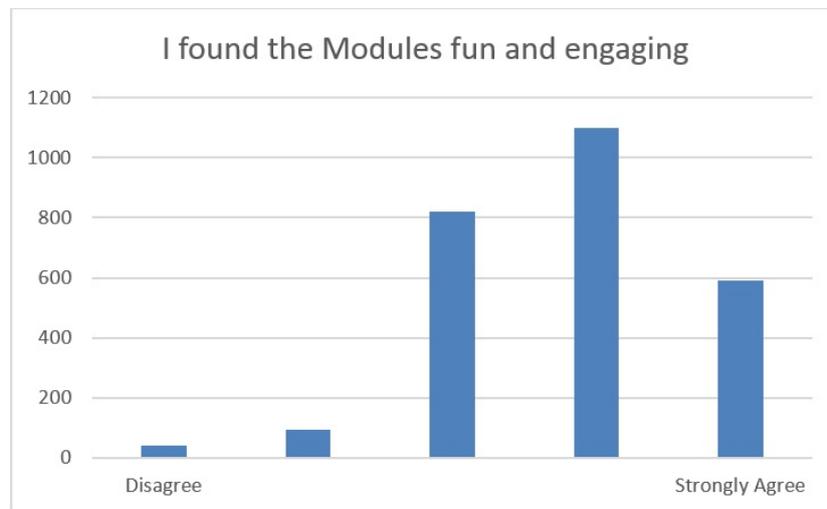


Figure 1: 64% of respondents (n=2644) found the Modules fun and engaging.

A strong majority of students reported that they like the Module design:

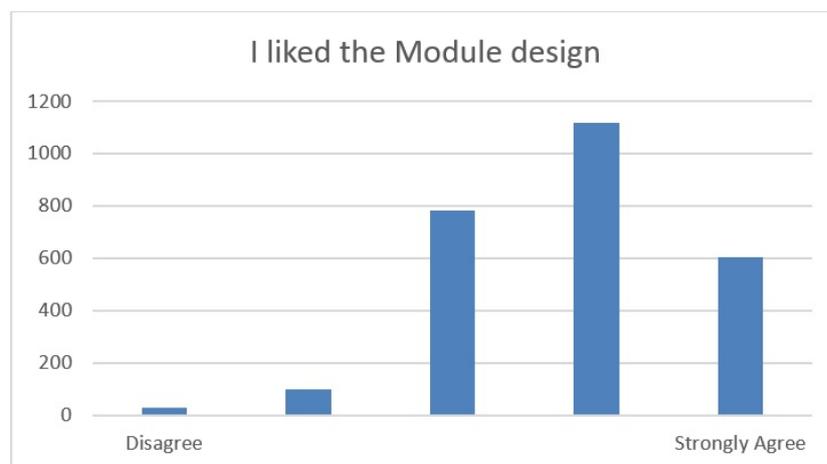


Figure 2: 65% of respondents (n=2638) indicated they liked the Module design.

Over 50 percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 'I have a better understanding about higher education' after completing a Module. This percentage likely shows that some of the modules had a stronger focus on higher education, for example *Module 4: University 101*, while other modules focussed more explicitly on jobs, skills, academic achievement, or individual attributes.

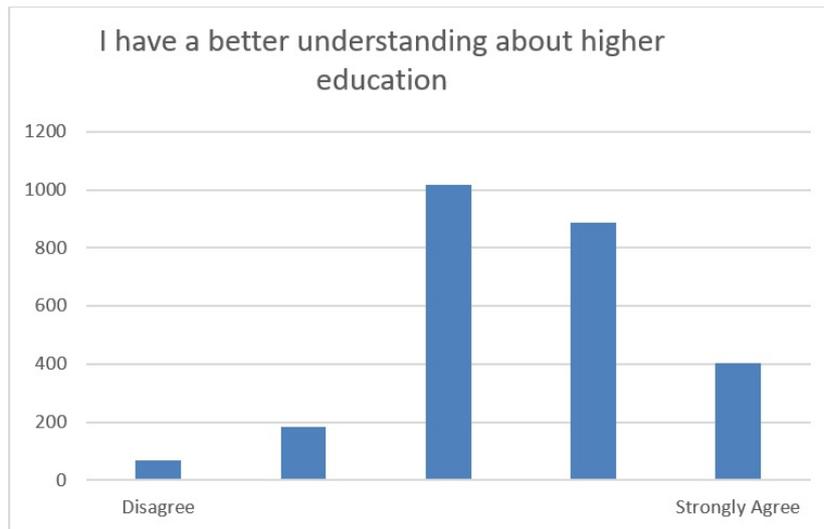


Figure 3: 50% of respondents (n=2557) agree they have a better understanding of higher education.

Similarly, in the below Figure 4, 47 percent of student respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were thinking more about university after participating in the modules. This likely reflects that several modules have a focus other than explicitly on higher education.

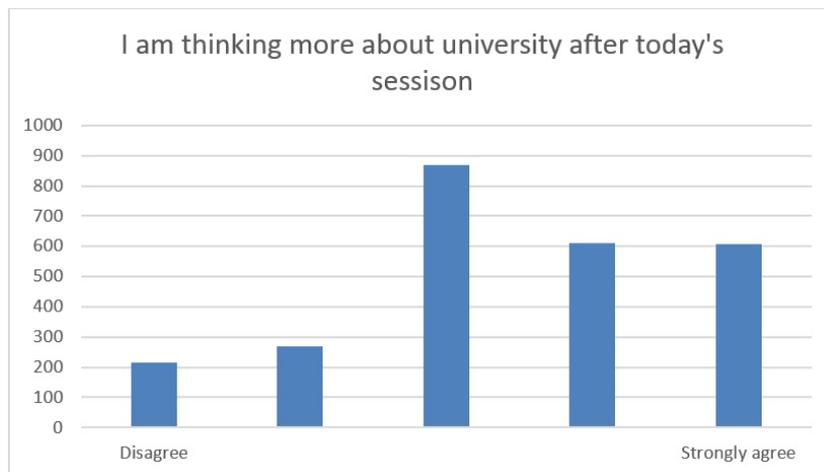


Figure 4: 47% of respondents (n=2570) are thinking more about university after participating in the Modules.

Program participants were asked what they aspire to do post-school. Results for respondents are shown below in Figure 5.

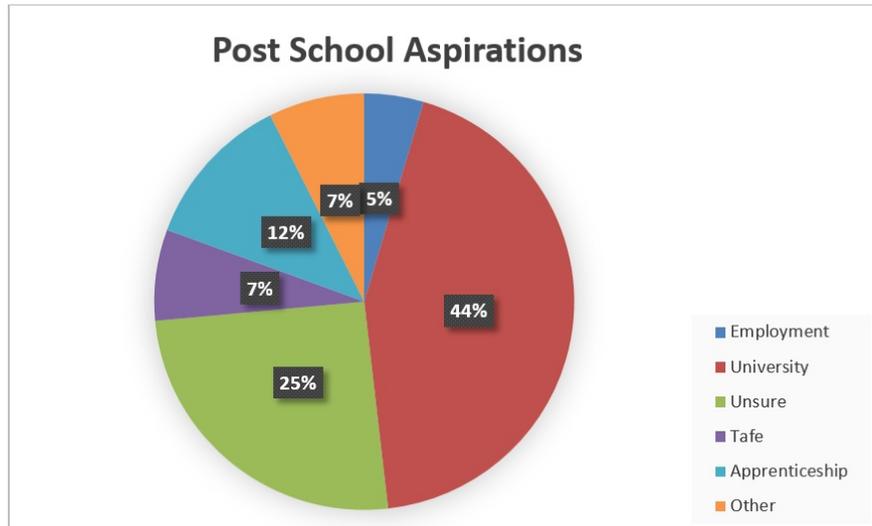


Figure 5: 44% are aspiring to university.

Many students provided additional comments upon the conclusion of the Modules, highlighting the informative, educational and engaging nature of the Raising Aspirations Modules.

- *“It has helped me decide what I want to do.”*
- *“Task was good, as it helps us understand and consider the options available in the future.”*
- *“This module really helps me gain more understanding of what I want to do when I leave high school.”*
- *“I now know the subjects I need to choose for my HSC which is a huge help.”*
- *“I found it fun and enjoyable, I am now considering university.”*
- *“I liked this program today I learned more about university and thinking about it more.”*
- *“This module is really helpful, it helps break down and explain an overwhelming decision (for our future career and uni choices).”*
- *“This module gave me more of an idea on how to get where I want to be.”*
- *“It was a fun and engaging program which helps me think about what I want to do after year 12.”*



Image 3: Leeton High School students with UC Aspirations Agent and Outreach Officer

Additional student feedback & testimonials:

“Even though I still don't have a perfect idea of what I want to do in my future, I'm closer than I was before. I now have a better idea of what I want for my future, as well as how I can get there once I decide. Videos about the student lives were great, I feel a lot better knowing that even if I go to university still a bit unsure about what I would like to become, I will get there eventually even if plans change along the way.” Year 10 Student, Cowra HS

I think the modules did a lot of testing to see what I valued, and what I wanted or my future, as well as how I saw myself getting there”. Year 10 Student, Boorowa Central School

Teacher feedback

Feedback was also received from teachers supervising student participation in the program across each of the Modules. Teachers responded positively to a range of post-program questions. Of the teachers who responded to the surveys, most agreed that the Raising Aspirations program helped students to realise there are benefits of higher education and that university might be achievable for them.

Results for teacher respondents (n=95) at the conclusion of the program are shown below in Figures 6 – 8.

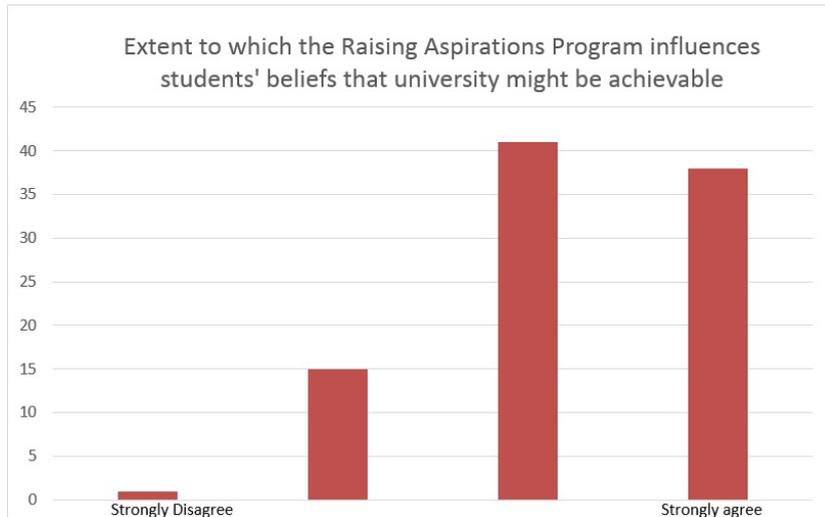


Figure 6: 83% of teacher respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the Raising Aspirations program influences students' belief that university might be achievable.

A considerable change in the Raising Aspirations program from previous UC Outreach Programs was the predominantly online nature of the program. The design of the modules aimed to provide information, guidance and support in a 'just-in-time' accessible format to schools in rural or regional areas. Figure 7 below indicates that a strong majority of teachers saw benefit and value in using online modules for this purpose.

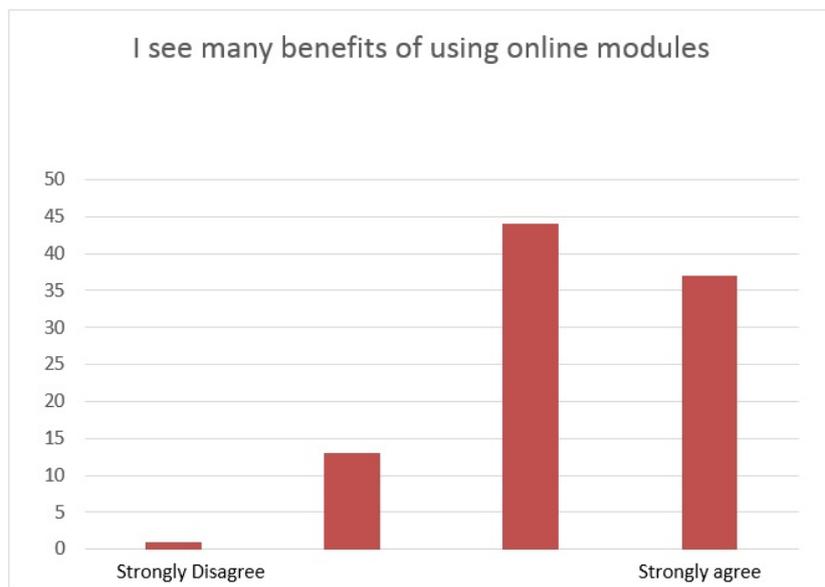


Figure 7: 85 % of teachers see the benefits of using online modules.

Overwhelmingly, participating teachers felt that the program had a positive impact on participating students, as seen below in Figure 8.

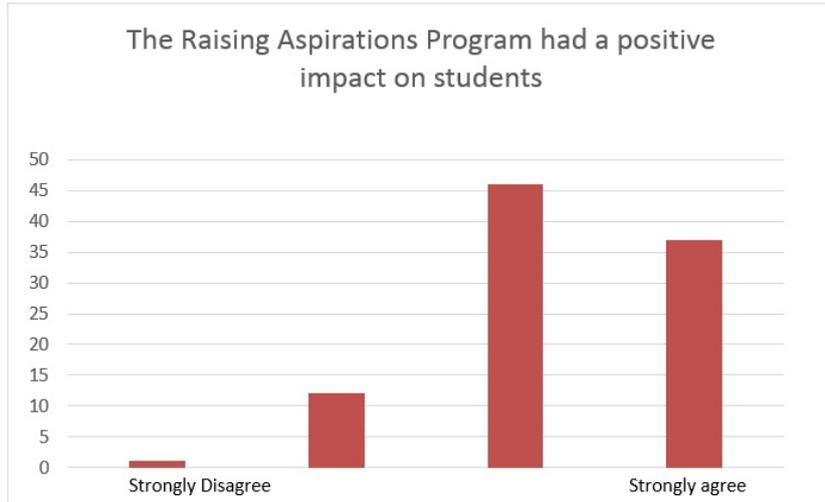


Figure 8: 86% of teachers believe the Raising Aspirations Program had a positive impact on students.

Participating teachers provided the following additional feedback at the completion of the Raising Aspirations Program.

“Great facilitators and well-designed modules.”

“Can't wait to do the modules myself. I will definitely use this resource in my teaching practice.”

“Great to see students engaged in the modules, especially at the end of the day!”

“Great program- would be happy to continue!”

Based on participant feedback and evaluation results, it is apparent that students from rural and regional and low-SES backgrounds found the Raising Aspirations Program to be valuable in breaking down barriers to higher education. Results from both teachers and students demonstrate the value of this project and indicate that access to the series of interactive online modules was successful in raising the aspirations of students.



Image 4: Temora High School students with UC Aspirations Agent and Outreach Officer

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

Student contacts	2,706
Journal (or other publication) submissions	N/A
Conference Presentations	1 <i>Equity Practitioners Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA), Brisbane November 2017</i>
Websites developed	N/A
Educational or marketing campaigns	N/A
Community organisations engaged	N/A
Schools engaged	36
Parental/family contacts	N/A

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

E.g. Percentage increase in enrolment	N/A
E.g. Percentage increase in aspiration	N/A

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

For Raising Aspirations to be successfully implemented in schools located in regional areas, access to adequate technology was essential. Raising Aspirations was designed to be an online program accessible through a Learning Management System (LMS), Canvas Instructure, and this required a sound level of IT resourcing in schools which wasn't always possible. During the pilot year there were a variety of technological issues unforeseen prior to delivery in schools. Factors ranged from slow internet speeds or no internet connection, students forgetting passwords and low computer literacy, to broken or insufficient numbers of computers available in schools.

Slow internet speeds and no internet connection were an ongoing issue in Queensland. It was common for activities to take lengthy periods to load, or to not load at all. This led to the development of 'paper-based' lessons (lesson plan accompanied by: worksheets/modified activities/videos on USB) where the online content was adapted to suit face-to-face instruction with limited to no support of technology. This issue was minimal in NSW but led to the conclusion that not all schools considered for the program roll-out in 2018 i.e. School of Distance Education, would be suitable given their level of remoteness and therefore the lack of suitable IT infrastructure.

Students forgetting their passwords to Canvas was experienced in NSW and became apparent during the second in-class sessions. This was addressed by creating a saved list of passwords for students and distributing passwords, in printed format, at the commencement of each session. The level of computer illiteracy amongst students was a significant and unanticipated challenge that was experienced across states. Students had issues navigating Canvas, logging in, performing basic troubleshooting tasks such as 'forgot password', and accessing and using their school email accounts. Whilst students described being able to use platforms such as Facebook Messenger, a reduced version of email, they

struggled to use traditional email systems. In classes where the majority of students struggled, instructions were written on the whiteboard and the class worked together step-by-step. In classes where there were a few who struggled, Outreach Officers assisted on a one-on-one basis.

Insufficient or broken computers/computer labs in schools was a concern. Some computer labs were disjointed in location and therefore presented a challenge in providing support and instruction to students. Large quantities of broken computers in labs also presented a problem. These assets were often unmarked resulting in wasted time at the beginning of sessions by students trying to use them. To remedy this, Outreach Officers took iPads for students to use, however, this wasn't an ideal solution as the school Wi-Fi was either not easily accessible or was too slow for the program.

Whilst NSW experienced a variety of IT challenges during delivery, most of these were resolved or modified satisfactorily. QLD experienced significant and ongoing technological challenges as solutions to issues such as slow internet speeds were out of the University's control.

Further challenges to the project included aligning a large number of school visits with a small Project team, navigating the different higher education and school education systems of NSW and QLD, and booking in-school visits with busy schools.

Throughout the duration of the Raising Aspirations program, the Project Team were consistently flexible and innovative in their response to obstacles. Their continued commitment to delivering the best possible program outcomes ensured the successful implementation of the Raising Aspirations project.

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

List the titles of any published reports, pamphlets or other documentation produced in the course of the Project and attach them to this Final Report.

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

TYPE	AUTHOR	DATE OF PUBLICATION	PUBLICATION DETAILS
<i>E.g. Journal article; conference paper; website; pamphlet, etc.</i>			<i>Name of journal; conference title and date; website URL, etc.</i>
Conference presentation	Laurie Poretti	22/11/17	EPHEA Brisbane 2017: <i>Re-imagining equity: now and in the future</i>
Informational flyer	University of Canberra	01/04/17	Distributed to NSW & Queensland schools via email and hardcopy. Also available on UC webpage: www.canberra.edu.au
List of Participating Schools in New South Wales and Northern Queensland	University of Canberra	N/A	N/A

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: \$562.44*
- *the reason for this underspend: Travel and accommodation costs for the Raising Aspirations program were slightly less than anticipated in northern Queensland due to the fewer number of school visits that were completed.*

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: *Raising aspiration and achievement in regional schools through innovative online modules* 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	Nick Klomp
Position	(Acting) Vice-Chancellor and President
Signature	