

Catch me if YOU can – evidence based practice in International education services in the regions

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Evidence Based Practice in International Education forms a crucial part of student experience and satisfaction. If used effectively it can deliver outcomes beneficial to students and educational providers, with a strong emphasis on student well-being and the sustainability of an Internationalised Campus.

This is particularly important in the regions as we face a variety of challenges in attracting, maintaining, and growing student cohorts. Catching evidence in the regions using standard methods can be tricky. With lower student enrolments it is important to offer many opportunities and incentives to students in order to gain constructive feedback.

In addition to the university wide data collection processes such as the 'International Student Barometer' and the 'University Experience Survey', regional campuses collect other detailed data. Driving practices from this data can be slow and sometimes non-existent, particularly with multi-campus universities where the city campus holds the main strategic planning and management group. Communicating with and developing excellent working relationships with key staff is therefore critical in influencing the design of policy and processes, ensuring the regions receive equal priority.

With an abundance of evidence collected for the university, International students in the regions have shown great enthusiasm and initiative in developing a 'Strategic Marketing Plan' and 'Communications Strategy' for regional campuses, to attract, recruit, maintain and support students, and deliver excellence in education. After communicating this with relevant staff, the information is not always applied, driving evidence based practice away from the regions.

This presentation focuses on feedback methods that support regional growth, success versus challenges, and how to manage the design and application of Evidence Based Practise. Incorporating stakeholder expertise, as a collective group we therefore strive for innovation, collaboration, and commitment to deliver what students really want.

Biography:

Melissa McFarlane is an International Student Services Coordinator at La Trobe Universities Albury-Wodonga Campus. With a regional focus, Melissa researches 'points of difference' for International Student Services and Supports International Students to achieve excellence in 'what they need and want'. With a varied career and education in travel, culture, and education, it is Melissa's passion to assist International Education to achieve excellence through optimal well-being programs and support services, to contribute to a sustainable internationalised provider of education.