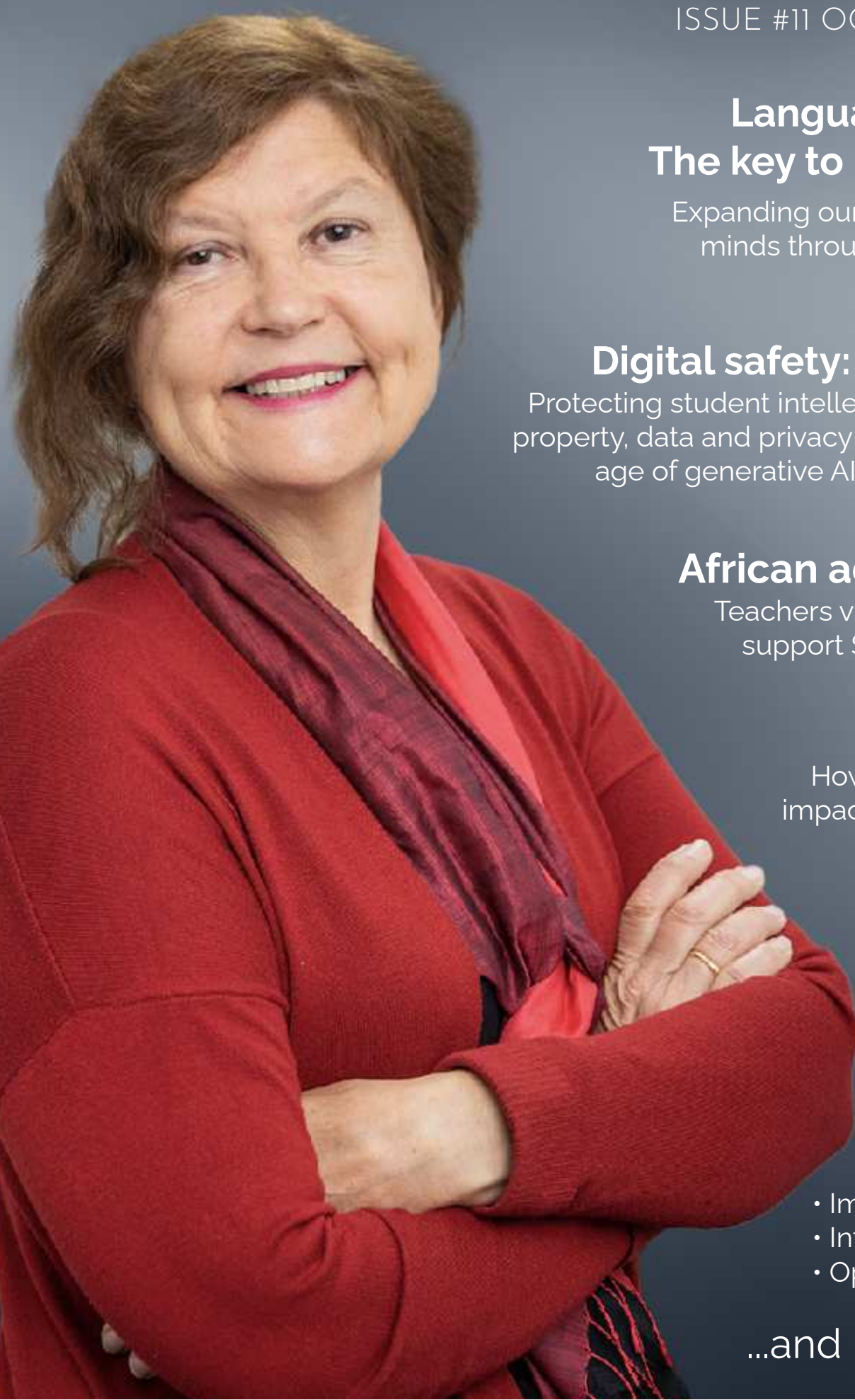


GREEN APPLE

ISSUE #11 OCTOBER 2023



Language:
The key to humanity

Expanding our hearts and
minds through words

Digital safety:

Protecting student intellectual
property, data and privacy in the
age of generative AI

African adventure!

Teachers visit Kenya to
support Sun Books

Insight:

How does culture
impact the classroom?

PLUS+

- Impact @ Navitas
- Interviews
- Opinions

...and much more!



Why Green Apple?

The humble apple has long been used to symbolise a gift for teachers. Historically, it is thought to trace back to 18th century Europe, when only the richest families could afford to educate their children. But poorer farming families also saw the value in education, and often paid teachers with produce, to allow their children to attend school.

The green symbolises Navitas. For almost three decades, Navitas has been bringing education opportunities to people all over the world. Those opportunities become knowledge and skills, thanks to the commitment of teaching, learning and academic staff.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear readers,

Welcome to Issue 11 of Green Apple - our publication written by teachers for teachers. Coincidentally, this edition falls on the eve of World Teachers' Day (5 October), a special occasion where we pause to pay homage to the teachers who shaped our lives in the past and celebrate those who continue to play such a huge role in educating students of all ages and backgrounds around the globe.

The theme for this year's World Teachers' Day is "The teachers we need for the education we want: The global imperative to reverse the teacher shortage."

Put bluntly, the world needs more teachers. Alongside our parents and family members, teachers have an enormous influence over the people we become. As mentors, guides and role models, teachers adapt to a wide range of challenges and circumstances to deliver the best learning and development opportunities for those under their tutelage. They inspire us to be creative, curious, innovative and resourceful. They teach resilience and foster our inquisitive nature, encouraging us to question, to think outside the square and make the world a better place today than it was yesterday. At Navitas, our purpose is to transform lives through education, and our network of amazing teachers are integral to ensuring that an inclusive and high-quality education is available to all. I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank all our teachers for the contribution you make to Navitas and the lives of our students.

This issue of Green Apple is jam-packed with interesting and informative stories from across our education network - insightful opinion pieces, candid interviews with teachers and a look into some of the cutting edge approaches we're taking to learning make this a must read.

We've also been thinking a lot about the impact we have as an organisation - on the students we teach, the colleagues we employ and the partners and communities we serve. On page 18, you can learn all about Impact at Navitas and our priorities for the coming months and years. I'm also thrilled to introduce our new Navitas Education Trust (NET) partners whom we will be working closely with to bring new and innovative education projects to children around the world.

In the ever-evolving artificial intelligence space, we've called on the experience of Dr. Upeka Somaratne to share how the teaching community can use AI in daily practice, and what precautions need to be taken to protect the intellectual property, data and privacy of students, and ensure compliance with current regulations.

Happy reading!

Scott.





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GREEN APPLE OPINION

Views from within the
teaching community



Active Learning and the engagement journey

by Felicity Inns, Director of Learning and Teaching,
International College of Portsmouth



The challenge of engaging students in the classroom is not new. In the past there has been a reliance and expectation that students will step up and engage with material taught, which of course is not always the case.

Many of us are familiar with the idea of a lecture in university having only one speaker, the lecturer, in the front of the room and the students sit quietly and take notes and will walk out of the room having learned and digested everything taught. So how does Active Learning encourage engagement in the classroom? Quite simply active learning is the process in which students become involved in their own learning.

In recent years we have seen that in order to achieve the best results and the best academic experience a more active approach is preferable. Active Learning means students and lecturers are on a journey together with participation, flexibility and commitment on both sides. Students are not passively absorbing knowledge but participating in activities that encourage subject learning through peer discussion and collaboration, cementing that knowledge. Active learning projects develop skills including teamwork, presentation and analysis that are later used in a workplace environment.

Including Active Learning is not always easy, it takes preparation but the benefits are profound. Within an international context encouraging engagement brings its own exciting challenges. Students from different backgrounds, cultures, and education systems bring unique insight. Equally it means that the approach the lecturer uses to engage students has to be flexible to support the needs of a diverse cohort. As one lecturer I work with stated *"We are all here to learn from each other... we all come from a different cultural background... we appreciate and respect the uniqueness of our cultures"*.

The challenge is that in a room of 20 students, there are 20 points of view, sets of values, beliefs and experiences. It is imperative to create a safe space for learning on the first day, to make sure each student feels valued, heard and able to speak up. There are many Active Learning activities that can support and encourage empathy and understanding and in so doing foster the ideal learning environment for success and engagement.

As former South African President Nelson Mandela said: *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"*.

“Active learning projects develop skills including teamwork, presentation and analysis that are later applied in a workplace environment.”



LANGUAGE IS KEY TO HUMANITY

by **Miles Hitchcock**
Senior Teacher
Navitas English Services



I recently asked my 17 year old son what he considered to be his first language.

"English," he replied, which surprised me, as his first words were Japanese, and he grew up in that country until he was 7. When he started Year 2 in Australia, the spoken English he had was acquired only from me, and his reading was in Japanese. Yet owing to the amazing brain development of the human child, and the skills and dedication of his public school teachers, he is now prepping for ATAR and a university degree.

"But," he added, "my mind is Japanese."

The adults in my English and Second Language (ESL) classes – most of them on pathways into university or VET courses – dedicate years and often their life-savings striving for the opportunities that Australian 17 year olds take for granted. They will no doubt benefit from these opportunities– but Australia (the lucky country) benefits from their minds – whether Japanese, Colombian, Kenyan, Spanish, Indonesian, or Chinese - that enrich Australian culture and workplaces with diverse abilities, ideas and traditions, all thanks to the power of language and education.



Language and education. It is now largely accepted in the fields of anthropology and biology that the massive frontal cortex of the human brain – remarkable amongst animals – evolved for social, not technological, reasons. To put it simply, we have big, quick-thinking brains not to deal with tool-making or environmental threats, but with each other. Humankind's ecological edge is not tool use or even intelligence – it is co-operation. Most people don't invent new tools, ideas or words – but what we all do naturally is share these like wildfire through our social groups. The medium of this co-operative sharing is language, and its formal name is education.

Language and education. It makes us who we are – not just individually and culturally, but as a species. It's what we do. It's our edge.

Without a shared language, there are no new ideas, no new 'ways of doing', no social co-operation. I've already mentioned the importance of English as a Second Language (ESL) education to Australia as an immigrant country. As the now accepted 'global second language', it is also central to humanity's intimations of co-operation on a global scale.

There are many who fear that the English language is a cultural hegemony, a negative legacy of the colonial era, displacing less privileged languages, leading to a flattening of cultural diversity. This is a dynamic question, but I would point to my son, and to the millions of ESL graduates in this country, who can share the contents of their minds – Japanese, Nigerian or Thai – with us, thanks to ESL. I would suggest that language proficiency doesn't colonise the mind. In fact, it expands it. Anyone who has learnt a second language understands the insights it can give into new 'ways of seeing'.

For example, the common Japanese word 'genki' – as in the daily public greeting "o genki deska?" on page one of the phrase-book – means something in between 'healthy', 'enthusiastic' and 'co-operative'. "Are you energetic and willing to work with us today?" is not a way Australians greet each other to the office, but it sure helps the Japanese! Anyone who has learnt a second language knows there are words in different languages that have no equivalence in others, and hence allow us to fill in the colour palette of meanings our culture has overlooked.

Ever since humans started migrating, we have been expanding our minds and cultures with second languages – not just news words and ideas, but yarns around the campfire. I see this happen every day in my classrooms, as people from distant countries get to know each other in English. As a judge in the ESL section of the Best Australian Yarn, I luckily get to hear new stories from around the world, while their tellers simultaneously find a new voice, and a new audience. The benefits run both ways.

So, instead of a having global second language, perhaps every global citizen should learn a second language? In preference to a global English hegemony, perhaps there should be more sharing of languages?

Recently many Australians, me among them, have been enriched by the flood of words from our First Nations - "Derbal Yerrigan" "djidi-djidi" "moorditj" "Whadjuk boodjar" – these words instantly transform the physical and cultural landscape, helping us to internalize our local Noongar culture. With the massive increase in bilingual place-names, books and school programs, is it time for a new acronym - NSL – Noongar as a Second Language (or Arrernte, or Wiradjuri...)?

Perhaps there is no surer way to expand our hearts and minds than to learn new words, and listen to new stories.

Miles Hitchcock, Senior Teacher, Navitas English, has been asked to judge the English as a Second Language (ESL) category for the Best Australian Yarn.

A writer and poet, Miles accepted the role as judge to explore the creative work of people who may not have, or do not seek out, the opportunity to be published in the mainstream art community. "During my ESL career in Australia and overseas my life has been enriched by the stories and experiences of the 1000s of people from all walks of life I have met in my classrooms," he said. "One reason I'm excited about the Navitas ESL Prize is the opportunity it gives us all to hear the voices that exist not just in every ESL classroom but across our multicultural society - voices that are often marginalised or reluctant to speak out."

Miles recently prepared this opinion piece for The West Australian newspaper as part of our support for The Best Australian Yarn competition, in particular the English as a Second Language (ESL) category.

ACADEMIC LEARNING PLANS: SETTING UP STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS



by Dr. Amandeep Kaur
Senior Tutor
ARU College



by Camilla Schmid
Senior Tutor
ARU College

From a hall populated with hundreds of students listening to lecturer to a one-on-one mentorship program, the approaches used for engaging students are constantly evolving. The implementation of personalised learning plans represents a significant shift in education, catering to the diverse needs and abilities of students. Personalised learning plans allow educators to offer support that aligns with each student's strengths, interests, and learning pace.

The foundation year with ARU College is a stimulating challenge for all our students; live presentations, research, study skills and reports on top of a whole new routine, community and lifestyle. The college offers a range of supportive initiatives from social events through to optional online support sessions. Despite this, life happens, and students can get stuck. To accommodate the diverse learning needs and preferences of students, personalised support is often the answer. An Academic Learning Plan at ARU College intends to support high-risk students that may struggle academically without individualised support and guidance. Keeping in mind our strategic priority of 'Embed Student First Philosophy' a personal tutor is assigned to the student to discuss and help them set achievable academic goals.

An Academic Learning Plan intervention is likely to look and feel quite different depending on the student's individual needs. Typically, the senior tutor sets up a meeting (weekly or bi-weekly) and checks in via email. It may be appropriate to use these tutorials to schedule a student's key deadlines, to read through assessment briefs together, to support with research and referencing skills or to set goals for academic success.

The students supported for Academic Learning Plan interventions are referred from a range of sources. Sometimes they make it clear on their own that they need more academic support. Often, they are referred by teachers using an academic concern reporting form. It may be that a student is returning from intermission and has been flagged by members of the college team that they're likely to need more support.



Regardless of how contact is established, the process is as follows:

- 1. Potential Academic Learning Plan candidates identified**
- 2. The student is discussed in a bi-weekly review meeting with senior tutors and academic officers. Together it is decided who has capacity and knowledge to help each student**
- 3. An initial meeting is set up, which involves a contract that students must sign**
- 4. Tutorials begin**
- 5. Progress is reviewed bi-weekly – ideally it takes a student 2-8 weeks to get back on track**

As a relatively new offering with ARU College, we've learnt and modified things along the way. Firstly, despite some crossover, these are not counselling sessions. Students who are struggling in other areas may not yet be ready for an Academic Learning Plan. Secondly, students must show willingness and responsibility to benefit from this help.

Students on Academic Learning Plans have benefitted immensely, with 75% able to progress successfully. This corroborates the fact that personalised learning has the highest likelihood of success.

Culture in the classroom

How student background can impact the learning experience

I've been teaching English as a Second Language in Australia and overseas for about 15 years. During this time, I've become increasingly interested in how culture influences second language acquisition, especially in relation to the productive skills of writing and speaking. What I discovered is that there are fundamental differences in thinking, behaviour and communication styles between different cultures depending on whether they are high context or low context.

English is described as a low context culture, meaning we assume we have a low level of shared knowledge and the context we operate in has low levels of commonality. As a result, communication in low context cultures is explicit, direct, clear and logical, to ensure that everyone, regardless of the context or their background, can understand the message clearly.

In low context cultures like Australia, other English-speaking countries and many Western European countries, verbal words are very important, and people are expected to speak up and speak their minds, to say what they mean in detail. In these cultures, individualistic 'I' thinking, leadership, assertiveness and transparency are valued and appreciated.

High context cultures assume a high degree of shared knowledge and common backgrounds. A lot of communication is implicit, through body language, non-verbal and contextual cues, facial expressions, gestures and tone. Actions have more impact than speaking, and verbal words are less important.

In high context cultures such as Mexico, Spain, Italy and many Arabic, South American, African and Asian countries, collectivist 'we' or 'community' thinking dominates. Conflict is managed through avoidance, obliging, or hinting at a problem until the behaviour changes. People from these cultures are known to embrace what is called spiral-logic which involves circling indirectly around a topic, very different from the direct low-context approach.



by **Jamina Tubbing**
Assistant Director
of Studies
Navitas English Services

Teaching students from high context cultures to communicate in a low context style involves supporting them to undergo significant shifts in thinking through consistent modelling, patience, empathy and cultural humility. Students from high context cultures often comment that they think the directness of English is rude, and that giving explicit examples is childish. Acknowledging this, and explicitly drawing attention to it can result in students having a lightbulb moment.

Helping students master English involves teaching them vocabulary and grammar, but also significantly how to think in low context ways. Opening their minds to these differences can help them take important and meaningful strides towards becoming more effective communicators in English speaking contexts.

Congratulations Jamina!

Jamina Tubbing, Assistant Director of Studies, Navitas English, recently received the **Pearson Bright Ideas award** for her engaging presentation on *High and Low Context Cultures* at the PD West Conference held in Perth.



Navitas University Partnerships Europe (UPE) division launches its first **Education Strategy**

The Academic Registry team has been delighted to launch the first ever Navitas University Partnership Europe (UPE) Education Strategy. Its foundations are built on three key pillars identified as pertinent in Pathway Education: 'Learning and Teaching', 'Student Experience' and 'Quality'.

We are particularly happy to add 'Student Experience' as its own pillar which has not previously had a direct focus; this allows us to drive exciting projects with collective input from a wider range of staff members such as our key Academic and Student Services teams.

The framework of the Strategy, its three pillars and nine themes are shown on the right.

Learning and Teaching

Our fundamental pedagogical practices



Student Experience

Our approach to student engagement, inside and outside of the classroom



Quality

Our assurance and enhancement of all educational activities





UPE Education Strategy Framework

As we aim to keep the Strategy up-to-date, the next stage is for the Academic Registry team to develop its Annual Plan later in Summer 2023, which will outline key projects over the next year and beyond.

We are particularly interested in having meaningful, cross-college conversations about how you may use or like to use the Strategy, so if you are passionate about any of its themes and are interested in getting involved in our projects, please do reach out to us on upe.academicregistry@navitas.com with your thoughts and ideas.

We can also add you to our Learning and Teaching Forum, Student Experience Forum or Quality Assurance Working Group if you'd like to link up with like-minded staff across the division.

The Academic Registry team is looking forward to working with you to enhance the experience and outcomes of our students for many years to come!



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INSIGHTS

Health and wellness in the teaching community

Outcomes from the 2023 Navitas Wellbeing Survey

The Navitas Wellbeing Survey for 2023 was conducted in May and it was great to have 1677 responses across all Navitas divisions globally. Of these, 656 responses were from our academic and teaching staff, which is fantastic as it helps Navitas understand how our employees are feeling and what they see as opportunities for improvement.

This survey included questions about belonging and inclusion, as we understand that staff feeling connected to their peers and safe in their workplaces, have greater protection against psychological injury. We also understand the importance of minimising psychosocial hazards, such as those associated with role clarity, job demands, organisational justice and manager support. Insights into these areas help to ensure the wellbeing of our employees.

When looking at the results from 2023, we have been told that 7 out of 10 of our teaching staff feel positive about the college or business they work for. Similarly, 70% of our teaching staff feel that they belong at work, up from 64% in 2022.

Our teaching teams have good role clarity with 83% knowing what good performance looks like, and 71% stating that they have the opportunity to do their best each day. Across our teams, we understand that stress levels can be high, with the greatest pressure being felt from high workloads and financial pressures.

Unsurprisingly, when asked about what types of support you'd like seeing developed or expanded, we heard that financial wellbeing, mental health and enhanced leadership skills were all of high interest.

Navitas is appreciative of the time that each employee took to answer our Wellbeing Survey for 2023. The richness of information, both in the open-text responses and Likert scale questions, provides an opportunity to understand common themes across our businesses and divisions. It will help inform our priorities and planning for 2024 and beyond.

For anyone who is looking for individual WHS support or would like to discuss their situation further, please reach out to your WHS Committee, HR representative.



by Cathy Cowdroy
Head of Wellness,
Health and Safety

How is the survey data being used?

The Navitas WHS team is using this information to guide our wellbeing webinar series topic selection, manager training sessions, other wellbeing initiatives and to support our psychosocial hazard management. Please keep a look out for information on upcoming WHS activities, including the global exercise challenge scheduled for October.





UNIVERSITIES ACCORD

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

By Simon Finn
Head of Strategic Engagement and Government Relations

Skills needs of the Australian economy, rapidly growing demand for tertiary qualifications and an urgent need to increase access by under-represented groups are the driving forces for review of Australian higher education.

In November 2022 Education Minister Jason Clare announced that an Australian Universities Accord panel, led by Professor Mary O'Kane, would undertake the first comprehensive review of higher education since 2008.

In announcing the Universities Accord, Minister Clare highlighted unprecedented forecast demand and a determination to address challenges in access and opportunity. While the 2008 Bradley Review, had successfully driven an increase in national higher education attainment, participation by underrepresented cohorts remains lower than the targets Professor Bradley set fifteen years ago.

Aligned with the challenge of increasing access, the Universities Accord is faced with transforming a successful higher education sector of today with innovative reforms that meet future needs and drive continued success.



Simon Finn

Current sector strengths - high quality institutions, strong regulatory arrangements, a world recognised student loan scheme and high levels of international student demand - brings opportunity to reset the legislative, regulatory, administrative and fiscal arrangements, without necessarily requiring major disruption to system design.

The Accord panel commenced consultations late in 2022 to elicit reform ideas from sector and community stakeholders. In June 2023, the Panel released its Interim Report confirming future demand pressures, with a target of 55% higher education attainment rate across the population driving a doubling of current enrolments to 1.8 million students by 2050.

INTERIM REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

While next phase of the review prepares the detail of reform recommendations, the Interim Report gives vision to the future in terms of possible 'system shifts' by 2035 including:

- An integrated tertiary system achieving significant growth in pursuit of ambitious national skills and equity targets
- Research reprioritised to strengthen its foundations and bring about widespread impact through translation and use
- Learning and teaching transformed with an ambitious commitment to student experience and use of technology.
- Higher education and vocational education connected through pathways, partnership and an up to date qualifications framework.
- Re-skilling and lifelong learning provided through more modular, stackable qualifications, including microcredentials, with full scaffolding and pathways.

To assist development of final recommendations, the Interim Report outlined around 70 ideas for consultation in the second half of 2023.

Five priority recommendations were also adopted for implementation by government – Commonwealth funded places for First Nations students, removal of the academic progression requirements for HELP eligibility, additional Regional Study Hubs with expansion to outer metro locations, university governance reforms, and extension of current university funding arrangements for the next two years.

In releasing the Interim Report Minister Clare highlighted some of the ideas contemplated in the Report which give insight to possible reforms including:

- Creation of Universal Learning Entitlement to assist as many students to attain qualifications and skills through access to Commonwealth support
- A new needs-based funding model for CSPs to give extra supports to under-represented groups
- A wider range of institutions with different missions which could support greater diversity, a teaching excellence focus and a national regional university

WHAT IS NAVITAS DOING?

In responding to the Interim Report the Navitas Government Relations team identified priorities we'll pursue leading up to the development of final recommendations including:

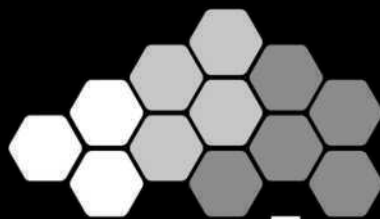
- Greater support for Pathway delivery models to grow their capacity to support the success of under-represented groups
- Equitable HELP settings for all students including abolition of the FEE-HELP Loan Fee currently only levied on non-university students
- Better utilisation of the University College Category to expand institutional diversity and the development of teaching excellence focused institutions

The full Navitas submission can be accessed at: navitas.com/who-we-are/government-submissions

As Australia's largest independent higher education company and university partner, Navitas will continue to contribute significantly to the success of Australia's higher education sector and managing the demand pressures of the future.

The Universities Accord final report is due in **December 2023**.

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impact



Introduction to Impact



Our Impact Priorities

Our Impact Priorities

At Navitas, we're thinking a lot about impact. We're considering the impact we have as an organisation - on the students we teach, the colleagues we employ, and the partners and communities we serve.

We're also considering our obligations as a global citizen and the role we can play in addressing some of the world's most significant challenges: the climate crisis, modern slavery, global poverty, and inequality and justice. How do we amplify our positive impact? And how do we manage impact that doesn't align with our values and goals?

To better understand, measure, and improve the impact we create in our changing world, we have developed an ESG (Environment Social Governance) strategy. Our approach is built around our impact as an employer, an educator and a global citizen, and is aligned to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



**Meaningful steps on
our journey towards
a better world.**



COMMUNITY
CONTRIBUTION &
DEVELOPMENT
OUTCOMES

Changing lives through education: Meet our 5 new NET partners

The Navitas Education Trust (NET) is one of our favourite parts of life at Navitas. For the past 10 years, NET has provided support to charitable organisations performing incredible work, bringing education to children around the world. Each year, we select a new round of partners to support new and innovative education projects.

Cambodian Children's Fund

NET funding will support the Leadership Training program in Phnom Penh, which links leadership and education for children and young people in the community. Cambodian Children's Fund aims to break cycles of poverty and abuse and create change in Cambodia by building the capacity of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in the surrounding areas of the Steung Meanchey garbage dump.



Indigo Foundation

NET funding will support the Advancement and Empowerment Programs in India, including after-school tuition, tailoring and typing, and IT training and library fund programs. Indigo Foundation is an innovative and independent community development organisation that works with local community partners around the world to empower women and girls, improve education and health outcomes, and defend human rights.





Vietnam Foundation

NET funding will support the Build a Future: Employability & Further Study Preparation Program for Disadvantaged students in Vietnam. Vietnam Foundation empowers people and communities in remote areas in rural Vietnam to break themselves out of the cycle of poverty with employability skills and access to education.



KOTO

NET funding will support the KOTO Hospitality Traineeship Program for disadvantaged young people in Hanoi, Vietnam. KOTO is a social enterprise that empowers at-risk youth in Vietnam through its holistic hospitality training program.



Classroom of Hope

NET funding will support the Rebuilding Schools program, using blocks from recycled plastics program to build schools in Lombok, Indonesia. Classroom of Hope creates a sustainable future by using recycled plastic waste to build safe environments for children to learn, families to live and people to thrive in rural parts of developing countries.

We are delighted to announce these partnerships for FY24.



SOLAR POWERED STUDY: NAVITAS VISITS SUN BOOKS IN KENYA

Sun Books has a mission: to provide educational resources to children in regional and remote communities through the use of sustainable, solar-power technology.

The Navitas Education Trust (NET) has been an important part of Navitas for the past 10 years. The NET funds education projects to help people gain better access to education, creating positive far-reaching impact for many communities around the world. For the past three years, the NET has had the pleasure of partnering with Sun Books, an initiative of the World Literacy Foundation, to support their projects in Kenya. On World Teachers' Day last year, we invited teachers from the Navitas network to apply for the opportunity to visit the Sun Books projects in Kisumu, Kenya.

From the incredible range of applicants, two teachers were selected to represent Navitas and see first-hand the work of our NET partners: Dr Kelly Roberts, Academic Lead Social Sciences, Student Engagement Lead, The College, Swansea University, and Megan Lee, ELICOS Coordinator, University of Canberra College English Language Centre.

Turn the page to hear from Kelly and Megan about their experiences in Kenya learning from and sharing knowledge with the teachers in Kisumu, Kenya.



KENYA - in their own words



Dr Kelly Roberts, Academic Lead Social Sciences, Student Engagement Lead, The College, Swansea University

I cannot express enough how grateful I am for being given this extraordinary opportunity. It was a privilege to visit Kenya as a representative of Navitas (and The College, Swansea University) and it was a pleasure to see firsthand how different schools are working to develop and enhance effective reading through the use of Sun Books.

I had the opportunity to speak to students and teachers about the Sun Books Kenya project, and all spoke positively about the impact this was having on their learning and reading skills. It was clear that access to appropriate books and resources is instrumental for these young children and their future. Students showed enthusiasm and a great willingness to learn, which was a joy to see.

I particularly enjoyed listening to students demonstrating their newly acquired reading skills and was impressed by how the teachers had adapted their teaching methods to use the resources available to them. In particular, at Nyamasaria Primary School, Judith Osoko's teaching methods impressed me as she used whole-class learning practices and gave consistent praise and support to her students.

On the International Day of the African Child, we attended Magadi Primary School. The day began with an assembly that included reading and a Q&A session. Students were asked pressing questions about discrimination at school and in society. I was impressed by the honest answers that students gave and was glad to see these issues being discussed and addressed at school.

I would like to extend a personal and heartfelt thank you to Vanessa, Sun Books manager, for leading this trip and for organising it so well and to Lamek for his support. It was also lovely to meet Navitas colleagues in Kisumu - Benson, Njeri and Cess. They gave up their free time to take us on a safari adventure, to a traditional market, and to Rift Valley and Lake Naivasha.

Finally, thank you to Navitas and all involved in providing me with this opportunity. It truly was a trip of a lifetime.





Megan Lee, ELICOS Coordinator, University of Canberra College English Language Centre.

We were delighted by the children's enthusiastic welcomes to their schools. The students' willingness to display their reading skills, and their joy in using the Navitas-funded resources was very heartening. It was also interesting to see how teachers were adapting the resources to suit their circumstances and their children's needs. We saw different approaches to displaying students' reading, undoubtedly reflecting different classroom practices.

Across all schools, from teachers and students, we heard that the Sun Books Kenya project was making a significant impact on students' interest in learning and on their reading skills. At Bltezza primary school, I met some Year 5 students hanging around outside the classroom that had the tablets. They told me that they had participated in the first year of the project and they wished they still had the tablets!

At Nyamasaria Primary School, where the Tynlvy phonics resources were being used, we were very impressed by Judith Osoko's teaching and her spellbound students. The teachers were so thrilled with the impact of the project that, as part of the speeches, we were given a wish list of the school's hopes for the project.

My greatest pleasure was to discover that the reading resources were culturally appropriate for the students. Having worked in education projects in developing countries, I am acutely aware of the difficulty of teaching with materials that are inappropriate. I applaud Sun Books for ensuring this fit with student needs.

On the International Day of the African Child, we attended an impressive choral reading event at the Magadi Primary School assembly. Despite the large number of students, the engagement of students in the reading and Q & A session was impressive. It was surprising to hear such honest reflections on discrimination at school and in Kenyan society. It is heartening to see that the teachers are addressing not just basic literacy but critical literacy skills. My challenge came when I was asked to be part of the judging panel for the spelling bee that followed the assembly. Sadly, I was unable keep up with the speed of some spellers in the primary school!



The NET would love to thank Vanessa and Lameck from Sun Books and the teachers at our incredible partner schools for welcoming Kelly and Megan into their classrooms and sharing this experience with the Navitas community.

NAVITAS SKILLED FUTURES CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF PROGRAM DELIVERY



Navitas Skilled Futures (NSF) this year celebrates 25 years of delivering the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) to help migrants and refugees improve their English language skills and settle in Australia. The program, funded by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, is also celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2023.

NSF has been marking the double celebration by hosting and participating in events, highlighting historic successes and sharing the stories of staff and students whose lives have been positively impacted by the free national program.



At a recent NSF-hosted function in South West Sydney – one of the regions where NSF delivers the AMEP – Navitas Skilled Futures Executive General Manager, Michael Cox, took guests on an historic journey of the program, showing images and video from as early as post WWII Australia, from the first English tuition class for new migrants in Bonegilla, Victoria, in 1948, to the comprehensive modern program being run across Australian today, including current NSF sites in NSW and the ACT.

"The AMEP was born in the 1940s in the spirit of collaboration to build the population, economic prosperity and security of the nation, and today has evolved into a program which provides individual pathway support, community building, specific workplace skills and more, to individuals who become valued and contributing members of our communities," Michael said.

In his 27 years working with the program, 15 of which for Navitas, Michael said he had been fortunate to witness first-hand the "life-changing outcomes" delivered not just to clients, but also flowing through to their families and their communities.



"Key to these outcomes over the past 25 years at Navitas, has been innovation and collaboration between providers, community, government, and other key stakeholders, to deliver an outstanding settlement English program by national and international standards."



As part of its 75-year celebrations, the Department of Home Affairs invited NSF to Parliament House in June, to present the story of one student's settlement journey to representatives from refugee and humanitarian organisations, the United Nations High Commission, and Members of Federal Parliament, including the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, Andrew Giles.

AMEP student Dr Karima Hamed Faryabi fled Taliban rule in Afghanistan with her two children almost two years ago. The former politician and GP spoke of how her classes at NSF Canberra were not only helping her with "Aussie English", but had also contributed to her getting work at Australian National University (ANU) mentoring medical students, getting her driver's licence, and, most of all, "surviving".

"When I came to college I didn't feel alone anymore," she said. "To meet people from other countries, like me, who understood what I was going through, helped reduce my stress. The teachers at Navitas also have such a positive way of guiding us, showing us the path and helping us learn from our mistakes. I am so grateful to the Australian Government, to Navitas and the community for helping us. The support has meant I have achieved a lot. But my biggest achievement really is surviving – being able to come to a beautiful, safe county and being alive with my kids."

At NSF's anniversary event – attended by guests from government, migrant and refugee services and community organisations, past and present AMEP staff and students and NSF partners – three students from different backgrounds also spoke about their positive experience with the program.

Aieshee, from Bangladesh, who not only found her dream job in IT after the AMEP and Pathways to Work program, but also conquered her water phobia through the English for Swimming project that ultimately resulted in employment in the sector, said: *"My main goal was to improve my English communication and know the culture, meet people from different countries who had migrated like me, and to build a network. [The AMEP] helped me with all of these! But I had no idea that I will get so many other bonus gifts. Navitas is like a family for me."*

Zein, from Indonesia, who is working as a web designer while completing his Bachelor of Design and Visual Communication at Western Sydney University, said his AMEP volunteer tutor helped him overcome homesickness, believe in himself and focus on self growth and development: *"I expected to improve my English, but I did not expect [the AMEP] would become the catalyst for transforming my life."*

Nezar, a recent arrival from Syria, where he worked for 35 years as a pediatrician, said: *"When we came to Australia we faced many challenges. The first one is language, because I studied medicine in my country in Arabic. At Navitas I am improving my English language because I have good teachers and I study hard." First I will improve my language and after that I will present my scientific competency to work as a pediatrician or General Practitioner in Australia, because I have 35 years' experience in my country."*

Acting Assistant Secretary of the Migrant English and Language Services Branch of the Department of Home Affairs, Caroline Hatswell, thanked NSF for its contribution to the AMEP over the past 25 years, and said the Department was "incredibly proud" of how the program had empowered people through language and connected them to community.

"In the 75 years [the AMEP] has been running ... about 2 million participants have been involved in the program - and that's just participants," Caroline said. "So when you take into account teaching staff, administration and volunteers, we know the AMEP has touched many, many people's lives."

Since 1998, NSF has delivered the AMEP to more than 250,000 people from 125 countries, helping them settle with the confidence to integrate, work in, and contribute to, society and achieve their full potential, according to NSF General Manager, Jetinder Macfarlane.

"In our 25 years of delivering the Adult Migrant English Program, we are grateful for the strong relationships we have built up with organisations, businesses and individuals in the refugee and migrant space, collaborating on a range of courses, projects and initiatives to empower students and also help reinforce positive multicultural messaging to the wider community," Jetinder said.

NSF, which won the NSW Premier's Multicultural Community Medal for Corporate Excellence for the third year in a row in 2023, was also recognised at this year's Awards for Excellence ceremony at the AMEP 75th Anniversary Service Provider Conference Dinner in Melbourne. Two staff members – Fairfield Youth Class Trainer, Camilla Portela, and Stakeholder Engagement Manager, Genevieve Lewis – were awarded for their outstanding contribution to the AMEP program (see Genevieve's Q&A on page 29).



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PROFILE

GENEVIEVE LEWIS

Genevieve Lewis, Navitas Skilled Futures Stakeholder Engagement Manager, was recognised with a national award this year for her continued commitment to the Adult Migrant English Program, its positive promotion in the community and her work with collaborative projects and events which contribute to genuine outcomes that benefit migrants, refugees and the wider community.

How long have you been at Navitas and what are the roles you've had?

I joined Navitas in September 2013 as a trainer – I taught all levels in the AMEP. I have also been an Academic Manager, Academic Team Leader and Quality Assurance Lead.

Tell us about your current role.

I work with a wide range of stakeholders, including community organisations, referring agencies, Migrant Resource Centres, libraries, schools, councils, media, employers and government departments to ascertain the needs of current and potential students. I collaborate with organisations, college teams and our learning designers to provide opportunities for our students through new courses and resources, excursions, guest speakers and workshops.

Navitas talks about its programs "changing lives". Do you see that happening?

Definitely, in all sorts of ways – the other day when a depressed young student smiled for the first time as he started to see that he could enjoy learning and feel hope for his future, when an ex-student stopped me in the street and told me he'd never forget Navitas – that when he arrived in Australia from Sudan he knew no English and we made him feel at home and now he has a good job, the women who lacked confidence and now have friends and encourage each other to join Pathway To Work Courses and look for work or enrol in further training.



What has been your biggest achievement to date?

I'm a big one for lots of little things and small steps but at the same time I am proud to be part of the team that has been awarded the Premier's Multicultural Community Medal for Corporate Business Excellence three years in a row.

What or who inspires you?

Creative, caring and passionate teachers, but mostly our wonderful students who continually amaze me with their resilience and determination to overcome a whole range of challenges and take one day at a time.

In your professional life, you work closely with migrants, refugees and organisations in this space. How does this impact you personally?

Mostly in a very positive way – my life is richer for working with people from many different cultural backgrounds. It has been incredibly rewarding to learn from others and for them to trust me with their stories/experiences as I try to support them to achieve their dreams and goals.



MARCELLA AGUILAR

Marcella Aguilar runs the Volunteer Tutor Scheme (VTS), a sub-program of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), at Navitas Skilled Futures*. Marcella is coincidentally celebrating her silver anniversary of working at Navitas in its 25th year of AMEP delivery.



How does the VTS work?

People send in an expression of interest to tutor someone (a refugee or migrant) studying through the AMEP. I provide them with 16 hours of training online to prepare them for tutoring. From there I do bespoke matches between the student and volunteers. For example, if someone is looking for employment, I find someone who's working, to not only provide English language tuition for them, but a form of mentoring and assisting with finding work. Lots of our clients have been able to find jobs this way. The volunteer program is only one hour a week and flexible. I also provide individualised ongoing support for the tutors.

What are some of the highlights you've seen?

Seeing the amazing changes in people that this role facilitates is a definite highlight. For example, I have had a number of clients who have been unable to leave their homes, who, through doing this course and pairing up with volunteers, have literally changed their lives, and they've been able to lead fuller lives.

Apart from learning English and friendship, what are some of the specific needs the VTS facilitates?

So many. Passing the Australian citizenship test is one of the needs we're finding very popular right now because it's become tough to pass. Many of our clients come to Australia, they may be illiterate, may have been injured in the wars, they are often minority groups in their home countries or villages and have been persecuted in their countries before leaving or fleeing, so we also have to facilitate lots of medical appointments where a bilingual (often) female can attend alongside them.



Tell us about the tutors you've met throughout the years.

They are amazing. They go above and beyond, and they care so much. Obviously, they are people who want to connect with their community and want to help new arrivals. Our volunteers want to see the impact their effort is having, and they want to learn about those other communities inside their own communities.

What have you learned through the VTS?

I think people need to be seen, heard and to share. People need to open up, slowly but surely. People need support and a lot of people coming to Australia have nothing – no social network, no family. But through the program, they eventually open up when they find the support they need.

Marcella, 25 years at Navitas, congratulations! Tell us why you have stayed so long.

Because it's made me feel very grateful for what I have. Every day I come across people that have absolutely nothing, but they are grateful to be here, and they are still smiling and they're happy to give, out of the nothing that they do have. It just makes you very grateful!

For more information about the Volunteer Tutor Scheme, or to register your interest, [click here](#).

*The VTS is part of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and funded by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.

TARA BROUWER

On 12 May 2023, Navitas completed its acquisition of Taylors College Sydney. The college provides the ideal stepping stone for students seeking a pathway to the prestigious University of Sydney.

With a strong focus on student experience, Tara Brouwer, Assistant Head of Department for the Faculty of Business and Liberal Arts, is part of the Taylors College team creating a learning environment in which students can thrive.

Tell us a bit about your background, before you came to Taylors College, Sydney.

I have been teaching at Taylors College for 8 years. I completed my education degree at Macquarie University. Upon graduating I worked in high schools throughout Western Sydney. My teaching areas are history and sociology.

Tell us about your role, your main responsibilities, the parts of it you enjoy most and the challenges you face.

I am an Assistant Head of Department for the Faculty of Business and Liberal Arts. I manage the Arts units of study on offer at Taylors college. These include history, geography, sociology, politics, and law. I enjoy my role as it provides me with an opportunity to communicate and build rapport with both staff and students and contribute to collegial discussions on academic success and student experience.

What are some of the biggest things you've learnt from working in higher education?

During all stages of their learning journey students require just as much wellbeing support as academic support especially during adolescence and as mature age students. Our students also come from a diverse range of backgrounds and adjusting to a new culture and lifestyle can be challenging. It is our job to provide them with a supportive learning and social environment to ensure that our students achieve their goals and success.

Do you have any special strategies for motivating students?

Student-centred learning allows our students increased personalisation of their learning process. This enhances belonging through collaborative activities with their peers. Students need time to digest information, so it is important that skill development is emphasised over content-driven teaching and learning styles.

Students are motivated when goals and objectives are clearly outlined at the beginning of study, so students know the requirements and expectations in their courses. Students enjoy real-life hands-on experiences. In Liberal Arts we host fieldwork opportunities for our students to increase their motivation and engagement through contemporary relevance and purpose.



Which of the Navitas values resonates with you most and why?

Adventurous in mind and spirit.

Adventurous in mind comes through as my colleagues will often say "Tara is bored again" because this is when I leap into overdrive with planning and organisation. I often design new innovative and creative events, lessons, activities and courses for staff and students at our college. I enjoy challenging myself to adapt and frequently change my teaching and learning style to increase student engagement.

I am adventurous in spirit as I love to travel. I hope to travel to 50 countries by the time I reach 50. I'm up to 36 so far. My favourite country that I have visited is Sri Lanka. Beautiful people, culture, history, and terrain. I have visited this country three times and I hope to visit again one day soon.

What does the Navitas purpose of transforming lives through education mean to you?

This is important to me as it was one of the reasons, I became a teacher. Teaching is a rewarding profession as students are our future. I enjoy challenging students through problem solving and critical thinking contexts. Their innovation and creativity will lead to their knowledge and expertise solving global issues such as climate change. I hope that through my teaching my students may also decide to enter a profession in education. This is also why I became a teacher. My history teacher in high school was inspirational.

What, in your view, are the most important skills education staff should be looking to develop for the future?

Our application of technological innovation and embracing of AI. We need to use technology to complement our course design and increase student engagement. There are benefits to AI that need further exploration in our curriculum and assessment design.

What would you say has been your greatest achievements – both professionally and personally?

My greatest achievement as an educator can be seen from visits I have had from alumni students visiting college after they have graduated from the University of Sydney. It is nice to see how far they have come since studying with us. Our students display new passions and commitments to personal goals. This is very rewarding as I was part of this learning journey.

A personal achievement for me was organising an overnight excursion for our students to Canberra. This was the first time I had organised an excursion of this scale. This was highly satisfying as it also contributed to their social and academic experience at Taylors College.

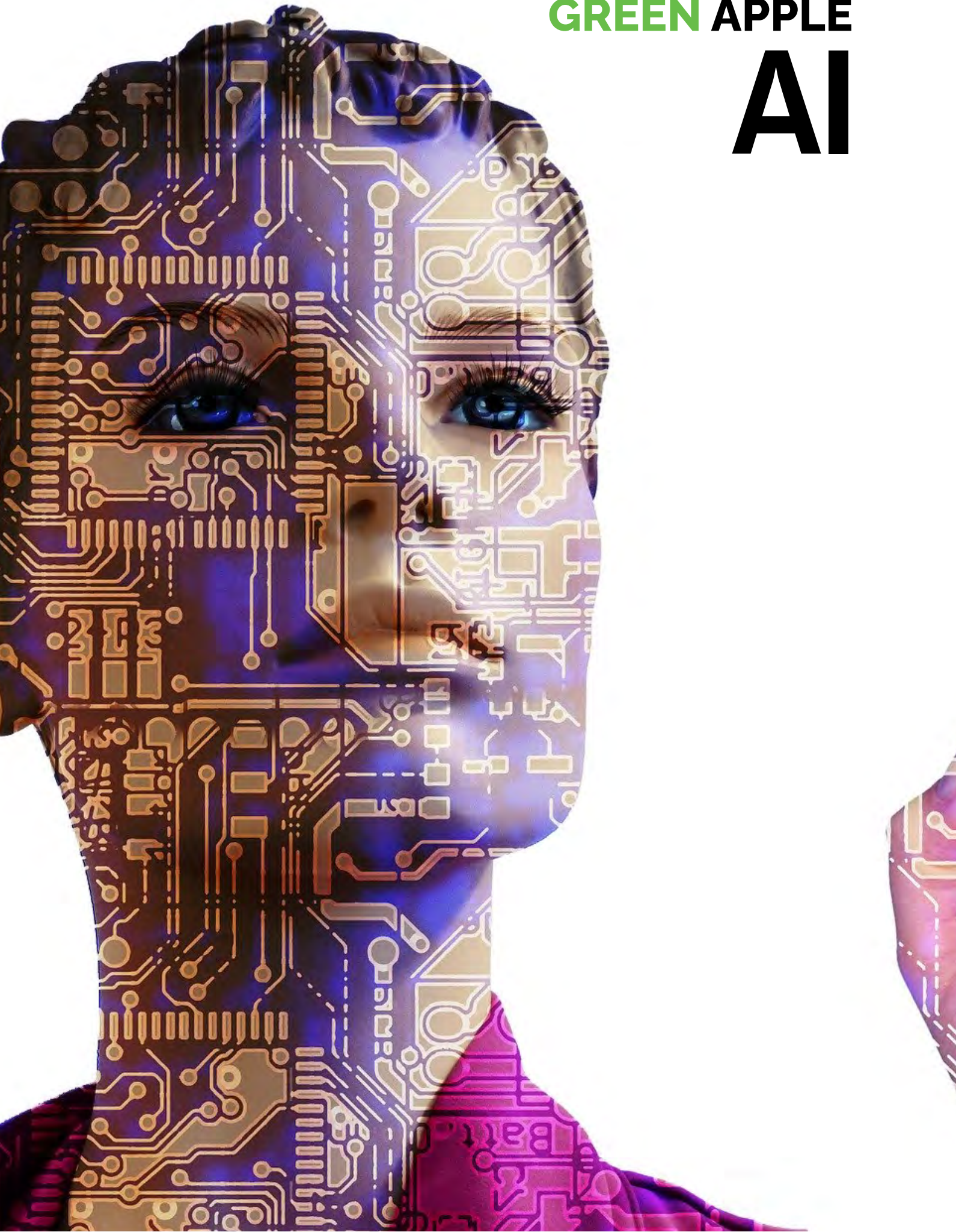
Which educators, living or deceased, that you know personally of from afar, inspire you?

Professor Marcia Langton is inspirational. She promotes social inclusion and advocates for human rights especially for Indigenous Australians. Her knowledge and expertise have contributed to my education of First Nations and how important it is to embed this content in the courses I design on Australian history. She has been instrumental in combating implicit bias and racism. These are areas that I am also passionate about.

What are some of the things you consider most important for the wellbeing of students, and of staff?

It is important for staff and students to take breaks from work and study to ensure a healthy work and personal life balance. Staff need time to rest to avoid burn out as teaching is not without its challenges. We encourage our students to explore Sydney on their weekends. We let them know when exciting events are on and encourage them to form friendships with their peers to enhance their experience as an international student.

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AI



Safeguarding student intellectual property, data and privacy in an age of generative artificial intelligence

by Alyce Hogg, Karen McRae and Dr. Upeka Somaratne

Large Language Models (LLMs) and other generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools offer many apparent benefits to educators. They allow us to automate and streamline administrative tasks, enable us to design personalised learning experiences, and help us to design engaging and interactive learning experiences and assessments. Much has been said about the potential impact of these tools on academic integrity and student learning. Less prominent however, are discussions about the risks these tools pose to student intellectual property (IP), data, and privacy.

Karen McRae and Alyce Hogg from Learning and Teaching Services UPA sat down with Navitas Data Scientist, Dr Upeka Somaratne, to discuss how teachers might be using GAI models in their practice, and what they need to be aware of in order to safeguard their students' intellectual property, data, and privacy, and ensure compliance with the standards and expectations of our internal and external regulators.

Let's explore some possible use cases of GAI, and outline what we need to know to ensure we are using these tools responsibly and ethically.

Case: A teacher inputs a student's assessment containing identifiable data into an AI system to generate feedback and a suggested grade.

To protect students' privacy and IP, avoid inputting identifiable student data into any AI system. This includes names, student IDs and other unique identifiers. Even if the system claims to protect data privacy, there is the risk that AI models may use this data for training purposes, and we don't know how or where this data might be used.

Case: A teacher de-identifies a student's assessment by removing their name, then inputs the assessment into an AI system to generate feedback and a suggested grade.

While removing identifiable data alleviates some privacy concerns, the feedback generated by an AI system lacks human judgement and is unlikely to be tailored to specific learning outcomes, or able to provide a nuanced understanding of a student's performance. AI systems responses are biased to its training data and might not be cognisant of the weighting of individual assessment components or the broader context of the curriculum. Additionally, this use case still involves inputting student IP into an AI system, which as discussed above, should be avoided.



Safeguarding student intellectual property, data and privacy in an age of generative artificial intelligence (continued)

Case: A teacher inputs an assessment brief into an AI system to generate an assessment rubric. The assessment brief's IP belongs to their partner university, not the college through which the teacher is employed.

Avoid inputting third-party IP, especially from our business partners, into AI models, unless you have explicit permission. It may be beneficial to instead engage the subject coordinator at your partner university in a discussion regarding guidelines on the use of AI in the unit.

Case: A teacher inputs multiple students' deidentified work into an AI system in order to train the system about their student cohort's strengths and weaknesses. The teacher hopes the AI will provide suggestions to personalise their teaching to address the specific needs of their cohort.

While de-identifying student work mitigates some privacy concerns, it may still infringe upon students' IP rights and privacy. Rather, consider providing the AI system with a summary of the challenges, characteristics and interests you have observed in your students. By inputting insights and patterns rather than student work, the AI can still generate personalised recommendations without compromising student IP. Remember, always critically assess the AI's suggestions using your own professional judgment, expertise, and understanding of your students.





DR. UPEKA SOMARATNE'S AI TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Dr. Upeka Somaratne



Use Generative AI as a tool to boost your productivity



Be aware of AI hallucinations



When LLMs are used in review and grading tasks, staff should verify accuracy and take responsibility for their decisions and/or reports.



Full transparency regarding the use of LLMs or similar tools is crucial (Disclose use of LLMs)



Keep experimenting with LLMs and share experiences. It is crucial to enable a form of collective learning.



Join the [Navitas Generative AI Toolkit community on Teams](#)

REMEMBER

While LLMs and GAI tools offer promising benefits for educators, such as automating tasks and personalising learning experiences, it is crucial to address the risks they pose.

Responsible and ethical use of these technologies is paramount, and we must be mindful of data ownership, ensure compliance with regulations, and be transparent in AI-driven decisions. Open dialogues with students about AI's role in education can foster trust. Striking a balance between innovation and safeguarding student rights will enable educators to leverage the potential of LLMs and GAI tools effectively while maintaining a secure and ethical learning environment.





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