



## Equity and Inclusion

Newsletter, October 2022

A focus on equity and inclusion is important for students in all educational contexts. The Learning and Teaching Repository showcases some of the most up-to-date research in Australian higher education, including research into previously overlooked groups. This Spotlight collates some of the recent additions to the repository on the topic of **equity and inclusion**. Projects include research into the needs of second language learners, Australian Indigenous students, vision impaired students and students from refugee backgrounds.

### From the Learning & Teaching Repository



#### **Generation 1.5 learners: Removing the mask of student invisibility and recognising the learning disconnections that marred their academic journeys**

<https://ltr.edu.au/vufind/Record/366057>

Students identified as Generation 1.5 learners are an increasing phenomenon in Australian universities yet may be 'invisible' or unknown to teaching staff. They are neither fully proficient in their first language nor in English which is typically their second language (L2).

Dr Elizabeth Serventy and Bill Allen reported on research in a paper for the journal *Student Success* that summarises Doctoral research by Serventy at Edith Cowan University, Australia that examined how Generation 1.5 students managed their undergraduate studies in a Perth-based, public university in Western Australia over an academic year.

Key findings include the invisibility of Generation 1.5 learners to academic staff, and the ways in which L2 learning 'disconnections' had influenced their academic studies. Greater awareness of the distinctive features of Generation 1.5 learners may improve academic outcomes. Such features include:

- **Conversational fluency:** Conversational fluency can provide a mask that contributes to Generation 1.5 learner invisibility.
- **A desire to fit in:** This can include a reluctance to seek feedback or to question assessment grades.
- **Scheduling conflicts and time scarcity:** Time issues can lead to a disconnect between learning support and L2 academic needs.

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# Equity and inclusion research from across Australia

The following projects researched areas related to equity and inclusion and possible strategies for supporting and promoting the inclusion of a diverse range of learners.



## **"A stepping stone that just pushed me further into wanting to go to university": Student perspectives on 'what works' for effective outreach strategies for Indigenous students**

<https://ltr.edu.au/vufind/Record/366051>

Drawing on findings from interviews with Indigenous university students as part of a National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE) Equity Fellowship, this paper identifies what works and what areas to strengthen in Indigenous specific outreach programs. The paper concludes by discussing the development of strategies and resources to build the evidence base of effective outreach activities for Indigenous students.

Authors: Katelyn Barney and Hayley Williams



## **Improving vision impaired students' access to graphics in higher education**

<https://ltr.edu.au/vufind/Record/365955>

This report describes a project that investigated the level and type of access vision impaired students gain to graphic components of their study materials in higher education in Australia, to uncover any barriers to access and inclusion, and to offer strategies and resources to enable improved access to graphics for blind and vision impaired students. For vision impaired students, graphic materials include anything that is not provided as text or audio.

Project Leader: Kim Marriot

Authors: Leona Holloway, Kim Marriot, Matthew Butler, Cagatay Goncu, Merrin McCracken and Thomas Perry



## **(Re)Claiming social capital: improving language and cultural pathways for students from refugee backgrounds into Australian Higher Education**

<https://ltr.edu.au/vufind/Record/365881>

This project comprised three sub-projects undertaken by the three partner institutions: The University of Newcastle, Macquarie University and Curtin University. Each partner examined a different 'pathway' with three different 'starting points' from which students from refugee backgrounds (SfRBs) might commence their higher education journey.

Project Leader: Seamus Fagan

Team members: Sally Baker, Evonne Irwin, Jaya Dantas, Shelley Gower, Sonal Singh, Mary Taiwo and Anne Marie Ross



*The Universities Australia Learning and Teaching Repository is a collection of higher education learning and teaching research valuable to university academics. It welcomes submissions related to equity and inclusion from Australian university staff. Email the Repository: [contact@ltr.edu.au](mailto:contact@ltr.edu.au)*

