

Editorial

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Welcome to Volume 17, Issue 3, 2026, of Student Success

This year, 2026, has seen an unprecedented number of excellent submissions to *Student Success* of both research articles and practice reports. Issue 3 for this year is therefore being published earlier in the year than usual, leaving open the possibility of a fourth *Student Success* issue later this year.

This issue contains 15 international papers – 12 research articles and 3 practice reports which highlight research and practice from the United Kingdom (UK), Oman, Japan, South Africa, Vietnam, India, Chile, Morocco, Thailand, New Zealand and Australia.

We are delighted that the articles and practice reports published in this issue reinforce our understanding that student success depends on far more than academic achievement alone. Across diverse international contexts, the contributions highlight the importance of effective transition support, student engagement, wellbeing, belonging, and culturally responsive institutional practices. Together, they demonstrate how proactive support, inclusive learning environments, and student-centred approaches can enhance outcomes for increasingly diverse student populations, including underrepresented, international, and Indigenous students.

The articles also showcase the impact of innovative and evidence-informed practices, including the thoughtful use of GenAI, enhanced feedback models, peer mentoring, proactive and holistic support strategies, and wellbeing initiatives. Collectively, these contributions advance equity, strengthen engagement, and enrich the student experience, reflecting the core mission of this Journal.

As always, the editorial team is grateful to all the authors, reviewers, Advisory Board and Editorial Board members, for their sustained and generous support of this open access publication.

Articles

This section begins with **Sierra Smucker, James Baird, Joanna MacDonnell and Rachel Bowden**, from the University of Brighton and Kingston University, UK, introducing us to the value of extended induction programs for underrepresented students in higher education, with findings indicating the need for such programs to be an essential feature of universities' efforts to improve student equity.

A paper from New Zealand follows, with **Zarqa Shaheen, Kumar Laxman and Priyal Nanayakkara** from ICL Graduate Business School investigating the impact of acculturation strategies on the academic success of Sri Lankan students, with results reinforcing the importance of institutional support for international students, and the type of support strategies that can be most valuable.

Elhafiz Mohammed and Ahmed ElWaly, from the Modern College of Business and Science in Oman provide the next article, which is a descriptive comparative study examining structured feedback practices in academic English writing development amongst students for whom English is a foreign language (EFL students).



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Following this, an article from Japan by **Siwon Park** from Juntendo University and **Megumi Sugita** from Kanda University of International Studies, examines the impact of a peer mentoring program which begins in the pre-enrolment period, at the point of a university offer. Positive impacts were evidenced by favourable student evaluations as well as by participating students' intentions to become mentors in future years.

Moeniera Moosa from the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, explores the role of self-directed learning as students make the transition from the school environment to that of university. This study seeks to understand the factors that both aid and inhibit students' ability to self-direct their learning during this transition, and how university staff and institutional processes can support this process.

Support for students is further explored in the following paper by **Hoang Anh, Trinh Thi Phuong** and **Vu Quy Trung** from Hanoi University of Industry in Vietnam, which examines psychological distress and help-seeking behaviour amongst undergraduate students in a Vietnamese university. The importance of proactive and appropriate institutional support services is highlighted by the findings.

The theme of student wellbeing continues in the next article, an Australian study by **Lyn Kee, Bradley Elphinstone, Linda Corrin** and **Jenny Game**. This collaborative research brings together two Australian universities, Swinburne University of Technology and Deakin University, with two Australian non-government organisations, Mental Health First Aid International and Game Changing Academy. Together the researchers investigate how students' narrative identity impacts not only on their learning but on their overall wellbeing, making an argument for shifting institutional practice towards more holistic and student-centred models of support.

Another UK study follows, by **Rick Hayman** and **Angela Hibbs** from Northumbria University, UK, **Kelly Edmunds** from the University of East Anglia, UK, and **Remco Polman** from Queensland University of Technology, Australia and the Education University of Hong Kong. This article examines postgraduate taught (PGT) students' motivations for entering university, through a large-scale pre-arrival qualitative study. The many insights from this research will help to inform university strategies that aim to support and engage students from the outset.

Next, from Mahatma Gandhi University, India, we have an article by **Ahmed Aliyi Mohammed** and **Santhosh P. Thampi** examining international student wellbeing from the perspective of how it relates to and is influenced by both institutional support and student engagement. Their study found that student engagement was positively influenced when students felt supported by their institution, which in turn strongly predicted psychological wellbeing.

Another Vietnamese study is by **Kim Loc Tran, Luan Trong Nguyen** and **Minh Khanh Pham** from FPT University, Vietnam. Through a single-case design, this study explores Vietnamese undergraduates' lived experience with generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)-assisted reflective learning, finding that GenAI-supported practices, when thoughtfully and purposefully implemented, can help to enhance reflective learning and student success.

The following article concerns a Chilean higher education case study, undertaken by researchers from Australia and Belgium, **Claudia A. Rivera Munoz** (University of Melbourne, Australia), **Lize Vanderstraeten** (KU Leuven and Ghent University, Belgium) and **Ryan Naylor** (University of Sydney, Australia). Here the first-year experience is examined within a widening participation context at two universities in Chile. This study establishes a clear link between low sense of belonging and high levels of academic stress with intentions to discontinue.

The last article in this section is an Australian study by **Melissa Fong-Emmerson, Claire Lambert, Braden Hill** and **Maria M. Ryan** from Edith Cowan University, Australia, which explores the perspectives of Indigenous Australian students on the marketing and communication materials used by universities to attract and recruit potential students. Using a qualitative, decolonising research design, this study reveals the lack of engagement with Indigenous voices, and makes clear recommendations for the ways in which universities conduct their marketing activities.

Practice Reports

Three examples of innovative institutional practice are included within this section. Firstly, **Zachary Quince** from Southern Cross University, Australia, introduces us to a feedback model that integrates GenAI to promote student equity.

The second practice report is from Morocco, in which **Nabil Es-Sahib** and **Latifa Okhaya** from Cadi Ayyad University, Morocco, **Kamal Takhdad** from the High Institute of Nursing Professions and Health Techniques, Morocco and **Leila**

Rafouk, also from Cadi Ayyad University, Morocco, take us through the development of a pathway through which student support at a Moroccan university counselling centre has been significantly improved.

This theme of improving and encouraging access to and use of student counselling and wellbeing services is further explored in the final paper and the third practice report for this issue. **Rattaakkhatee Akkhateerathitiphum, Santipap Nanthasarn** and **Jiranuwat Khamplew**, from Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand, introduce us to an innovative student wellbeing initiative in the form of a three-day interactive self-compassion exhibition at a Thai university, designed to introduce and expose students to the counselling and psychological services available to them on campus.

Finally, our sincere thanks to all authors for their dedicated work in advancing student success which is represented within this Issue. Please now read on and enjoy the contents of *Student Success*, Volume 17, Issue 3, 2026!

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