

HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY MESSAGES

- Despite the impact of COVID-19 across the sector, PDF article downloads and abstract views have continued to accelerate: March 2020 saw the largest number of views and downloads for the year (around 8667 abstract views and 5396 PDF downloads). This result was similar in the same month in 2019 which coincided with the release of the annual general issue.
- While most submissions were from Australian authors, the past 12 months has seen an increased number of submissions from the US. The percentage of articles from countries other than Australia is now at 22%
- Each paper ready for publication, is now published as *Online First* with consideration of the timing of the next open issue. Online First articles are released according to their topicality. This is also a strategic decision that assists manage the increasing number of submissions and helps to avoid long wait periods for authors from acceptance to publication.
- The annual STARS Conference was postponed in 2020 and hence, there was no Conference issue of the journal published, however, a selection of well-reviewed conference papers was selected for publication in the general issue published in November (Volume 11, Issue 2)

ABSTRACT VIEWS AND DOWNLOADS

Around **176,000** full article downloads have been recorded since the first issue was published in 2010 to December 2019. Abstract views during this time have totaled over **226,000**. *Figure 1* indicates the abstract view and download profile since 2015. As expected, peak access to the Journal's website has occurred each time a new issue is published. The Feb/March general issue has been the most accessed in 2019 and 2020.

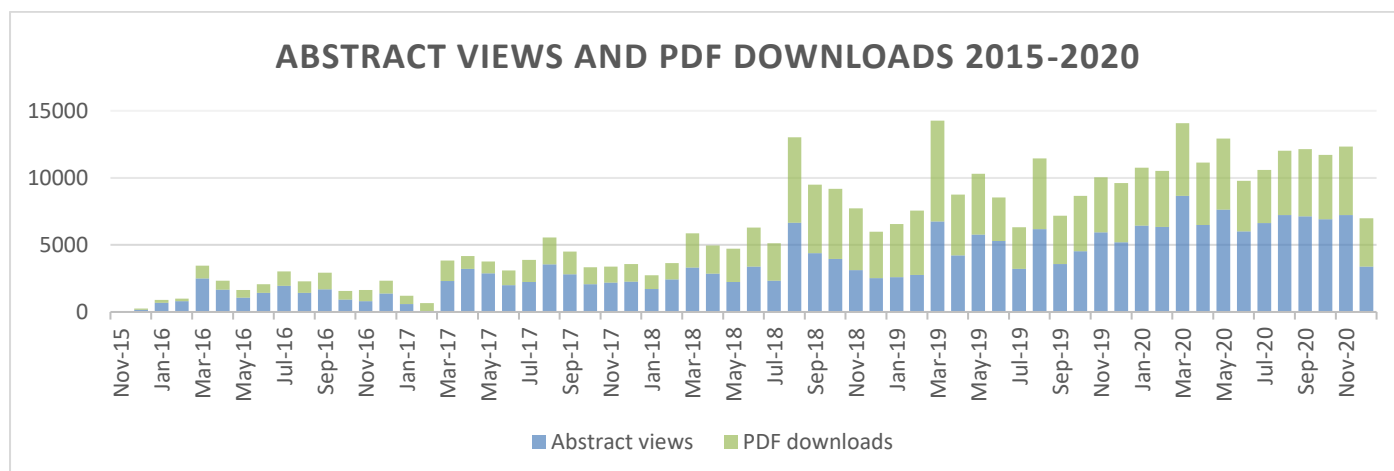


Figure 1: 2015-2020 Abstract views and PDF downloads

Figure 2 indicates the increase in abstract views since 2019. In the 12 months to December 2018, these view and download numbers are almost the same. While both views and downloads are increasing, abstract views continue to rise, perhaps as a result of increased interest and use of social media.

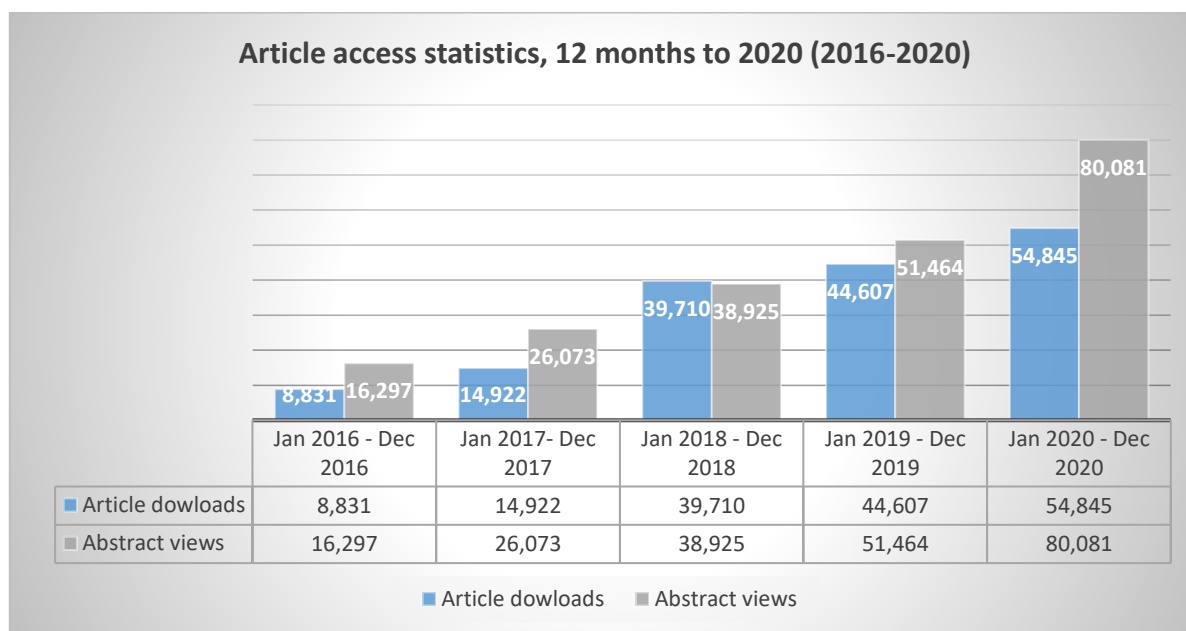


Figure 2: Article access statistics in 12-month periods (2016-2020)

SUBMISSION RATES

Submission numbers and the statistics related to papers accepted and declined are skewed due to the inclusion of special issues (two of three issues) where submissions go through a workflow external to the publishing software. However, 2020 statistics indicate that desk rejections were at 56% overall (54% in 2019). A high number of submissions are from Iran and North Africa and are often project and thesis related topics.

INTERNATIONAL SCOPE

Australian authors still dominate the number of accepted submissions. Just under 80% of all accepted papers since 2010 are Australian. New Zealand authors make up 10% followed by US (5%) and UK (2%). Countries of authorship also include Ireland, Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Germany, Taiwan, Pakistan and Vietnam.

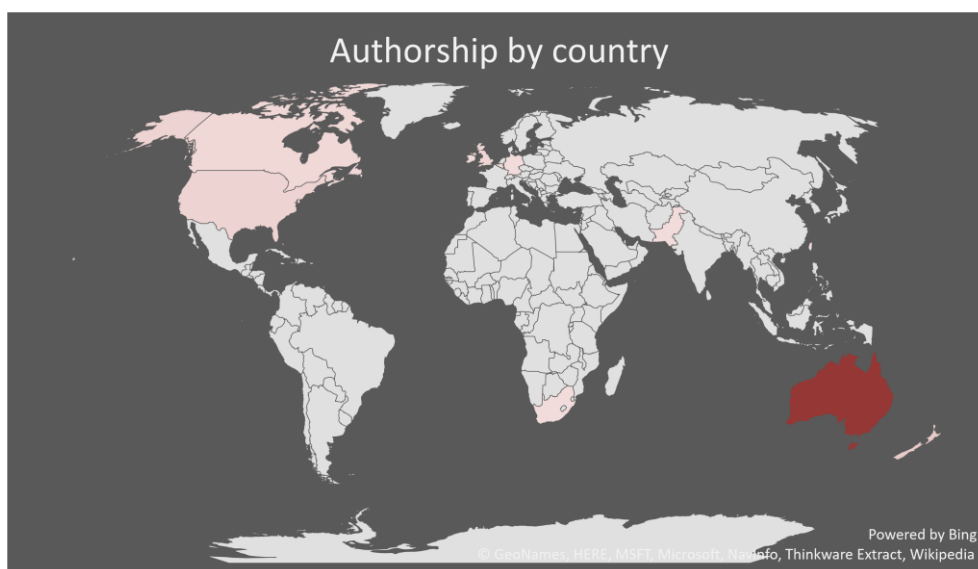


Figure 3: Authorship by country

Increasing the relevance of the Journal internationally requires sustained efforts to promote topicality, relevance and the contributive nature of the publication. It is anticipated that the inclusion in Scopus may increase the number of submissions moving forward.

PUBLISHING TRENDS

In 2018, *Student Success* commenced publishing three issues per year: one general issue and two special issues (one special issue dedicated to the STARS Conference). This was done in order to improve the review of the journal for inclusion in Scopus.

In 2020 the special issue was a selection of papers from the **EPHEA/NAEEA Biennial Conference *Enabling Excellence through Equity* (Volume 11, Issue 1 2020)**. Guest Editors: **Professor Liz Thomas, Dr Pranita Anand and Ms Jacinta McNamara**

In 2021, Guest Editors **Professor Marcia Devlin and Dr Jade Mackay** will present their special issue ***Student Success in a Global Pandemic***

ONLINE FIRST

As each paper is ready for publication, it is published as **Online First** dependent on the timing of the next open issue. Contributions published Online First are citable by journal title and DOI. When the next scheduled issue is complete, the Online First manuscript becomes part of that issue and will no longer appear on a dedicated [Online First page](#). The release of articles before the issue release dates is contributing to the sustained interest in the Journal. 'Online First' articles are released according to their topicality. This is also a strategic initiative to cope with the increasing number of submissions and consequently reduce the long wait periods for authors from acceptance to publication.

INDEXING

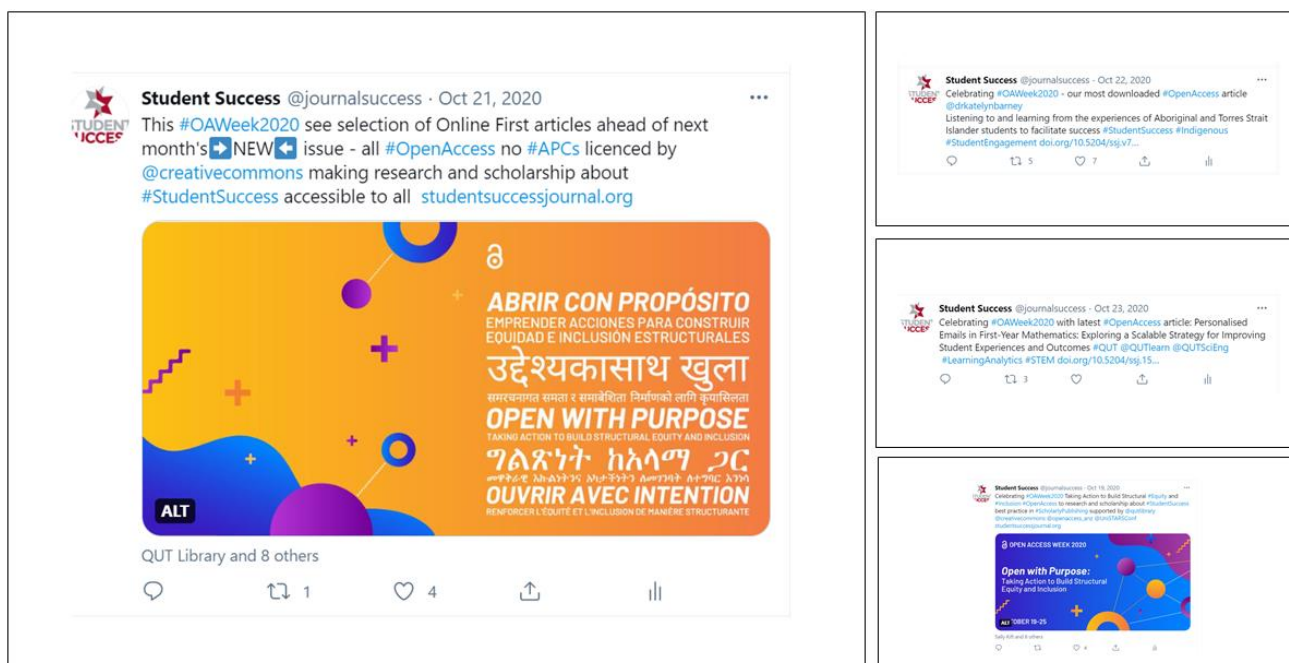
In early 2019 the Journal was accepted to inclusion in Scopus. Scopus recognition has been an important goal for the Journal since publishing commenced. Scopus is the world's largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature, and is published by Elsevier B.V. This ultimately increases the visibility of academic research and is often used as a measure by institutions in terms of citation impact. It is anticipated that in 2021 the journal will be allocated a quartile. There are four quartiles: Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4. Q1 is occupied by the top 25% of journals in the list.

Student Success is listed in the following indexes, aggregators and databases:

- **Scopus** - the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature
- **China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI)** - the largest and most-used academic online library in China
- **DOAJ** – an online directory that indexes and provides access to quality open access, peer-reviewed journals
- **EBSCO** – EBSCOhost Research Databases
- **Gale Cengage Learning** – is a leading publisher and aggregator of educational content, tools, services and other resources for libraries
- **Google Scholar** – a database that indexes websites and files of a scholarly nature
- **Informit (A+ Education)** – Australasian aggregator of bibliographic databases and journals
- **Paperity** – a multidisciplinary aggregator of open access journals and papers
- **ProQuest** – world's largest, multidisciplinary full-text database
- **ScienceOpen**- a professional networking platform for scholars to enhance their research in the open, make an impact, and receive credit for it
- **Trove** (National Library of Australia) - an aggregation of metadata, and a growing repository of full text digital resources originally published and made publicly available in Australia
- **Ulrichsweb** - Ulrich's™ is an authoritative source of bibliographic and publisher information on more than 300,00 periodicals of all types academic and scholarly journals
- **Web of Science (Emerging Sources Citation Index)** - the world's largest collection of research data, publications, and patents.

MARKETING

During 2020 QUT Library added a webpage under 'special collections' which showcases the five open access academic journals published by QUT (plus two that are archived) <https://www.library.qut.edu.au/about/collections/qutejournals/>. Open Access Week 2020 (October 19-25) was also an opportunity to promote the journals, including *Student Success*, in a series of structured tweets to bring attention to the value of open access publishing.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Since July 2013 *Student Success* has had a Twitter account which now has over 1520 followers. Profile visits average around 200 per month. Tweet impressions¹ are currently averaging 7K per month.

Twitter is used as an engagement tool for the Journal in the following way:

- Announce the publication of a new issue
- Promote individual articles (both new and previous)
- Sharing news regarding the Journal – appointment of Editorial Board members
- Promote interest in an upcoming issue
- Share links to Online First articles
- Promotion of STARS events/news



AUTHOR ENGAGEMENT

Just prior to article publication the author receives an email with the full citation for their records. An email attachment includes ways to increase usage and citation of your article (to educate authors on tips they can implement to make their articles more visible). Social media is used to disseminate each article and authors registered with the journal receive automated updates and journal announcements.

¹ Twitter impressions measure how many times posts may potentially show up in timelines (all the times a Tweet has been seen). It is not a measure of engagement.

STARS CONFERENCE AND NETWORKING

The annual [STARS Conference](#) remains the key opportunity to promote the Journal publishing a special issue from the event. The journal Twitter account was utilised in 2020 to communicate the postponement of the Conference and promote the 2021 details. The Journal editorial team have also been fortunate to receive promotion of the Journal via newsletters and blog posts from the [National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education \(NCSEHE\)](#).

JOURNAL WEBSITE UPDATES

A request has been made to QUT Library to fund a subscription for all the journals to Publons. Publons provides profiles for both researchers and publishers and is a way for academics to track, verify, and showcase their peer review and editorial contributions for academic journals. The Publons plug-in on the website is integrated into the reviewer workflow so academics can track and verify every review and editorial contribution and in full compliance with journal review policies. The plug-in ensures that reviewers have their work automatically added to their Publon profiles.

EDITORIAL TEAM UPDATES

Professor Mantz Yorke has retired from professional life and resigned from the Advisory Board. Professor Yorke's membership on the Journal Board oversaw 11 volumes (24 issues), which included the original journal title *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education* (2010-2015). In 2011 the editors interviewed Professor Yorke and Professor Steve Larkin (Volume 2 Issue 2) as part of the annual FYHE Conference held in Fremantle, Western Australia. (<https://fyhejournal.com/article/view/91/88.html>) The interview included key points of discussion like widening participation, inclusive pedagogy and the value of networks – issues that are just as relevant today and still resonate with practitioners across higher education. We are particularly grateful for Professor Yorke's involvement in the success of the publication and wish him the absolute best for the future.

Professor Karen Nelson, Editor-In-Chief
Professor Rachael Field, Editor
Professor Ron Oliver, Editor
Associate Professor Jason Lodge, Editor
Tracy Creagh, Journal Manager

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Professor Sally Kift (**Chair**) – President, Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows, Australia

- Professor Marcia Devlin – PhD, GAICD, Universities Australia appointee on the Advisory Board of the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Australia
- Professor Kerrie-Lee Krause – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Life), Deputy Provost and Honorary Professorial Fellow at The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Professor Steve Larkin – CEO and Director of the Batchelor Institute, Australia
- Professor Ruth Pickford – Director of the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT), Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom
- Professor Lorraine Stefani – Professor of Higher Education Strategic Engagement, University of Auckland, New Zealand
- Professor Vincent Tinto – Syracuse University, United States
- Dr Jennifer Keup, Director, The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, University of South Carolina, United States
- Professor Nicolette Lee, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education at La Trobe University, La Trobe University, Australia
- Professor Liz Thomas, Professor of Higher Education at Edge Hill University, United Kingdom
- Professor John Clarke, Australia

Founding Journal Advisory Board Member and Editorial Team Alumni:

- Professor Mantz Yorke – Visiting Professor, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

BEST PRACTICE IN OPEN ACCESS

Alignment to open access practices in academic publishing has not been an arbitrary consideration for *Student Success*. The benefits of open scholarship are clearly articulated by the host institution (QUT) in policy and practice and align to emerging global practices and trends in academic publishing. Open scholarship maximises the sharing of knowledge. For the author the benefits of publishing in open access include: increased citation and impact; improved visibility in terms of public engagement and interest, and; the reduction of prohibitive publishing barriers related to costs. Universities benefit from wider dissemination of research and by access to a wider range of educational resources.

Since 2010 QUT Library has hosted several online academic journals on Open Journal Systems (OJS), a journal management and publishing system developed by the Public Knowledge Project. OJS is open source software that can be installed and controlled locally providing a management system where editors can configure requirements, sections, review process, etc. to suit their particular publication. *Student Success* is published using the OJS software and has aspired to best practice in open access publishing which has included:

- Application of Creative Commons Licences to make published articles more readily available and useable
- Allowing the author to hold the copyright without restrictions
- Improving discoverability via the use of identifiers like ORCID and DOI
- Registration with the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and achieving best practice accreditation (The DOAJ Seal)
- Depositing content with a long-term digital preservation or archiving program
- A deposit policy registered with a deposit policy registry
- Embedding machine-readable CC licensing information in articles
- Recognition and adherence to standards of quality and integrity and inclusion of ethical guidelines and policies (e.g. Committee on Publication Ethics <http://publicationethics.org/>)

Table 1: Ten most accessed articles (as at 31 December 2020) – Abstract views counted as primary

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Author (country)</i>	<i>Article</i>	<i>Abstract views/PDF downloads</i>
Vol 7(1) General Issue	Katelyn Barney (AU)	<i>Listening to and learning from the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to facilitate success</i>	13,076/9422
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	8917/8901
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Meredith McKague, Lisa Phillips (AU)	<i>Implementing a Whole of Curriculum Approach to Student Wellbeing</i>	6915/456
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Lydia Woodyatt (AU)	<i>2019 Special Issue: Psychological Wellbeing and Distress in Higher Education (Editorial)</i>	6750/ 875
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Vincent Tinto (US)	<i>Reflections on Student Persistence</i>	5854/7540
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Suzi Hellmundt, Dallas Baker (AU)	<i>Encouraging engagement in enabling programs: The students' perspective</i>	5756/3979
Vol 6(2) Conference Issue	Robert Whannell, Patricia Whannell (AU)	<i>Identity theory as a theoretical framework to understand attrition for university students in transition</i>	5431/8395
Vol 10(2) Conference Issue	Mollie Dollinger, Jessica Vanderlelie (AU)	<i>Developing and enacting student governance and leadership training in higher education (Practice Report)</i>	4484/390
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Masha Smallhorn (AU)	<i>The flipped classroom: A learning model to increase student engagement not academic achievement</i>	4170/4846
Vol 9(2) General Issue	Karen Sutherland, Cindy Davis, Uwe Terton, Irene Visser (AU)	<i>University student social media use and its influence on offline engagement in higher educational communities</i>	4022/18685

Table 2: Five most downloaded articles (as at 31 December 2020)

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Author (country)</i>	<i>Article</i>	<i>PDF downloads</i>
Vol 9(2) General Issue	Karen Sutherland, Cindy Davis, Uwe Terton, Irene Visser (AU)	<i>University student social media use and its influence on offline engagement in higher educational communities</i>	18685
Vol 7(1) General Issue	Katelyn Barney (AU)	<i>Listening to and learning from the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to facilitate success</i>	9422
Vol 6(2) Conference Issue	Masha Smallhorn, Jeanne Young, Narelle Hunter, Karen Burke da Silva (AU)	<i>Inquiry based learning to improve student engagement in a large first year topic (Emerging Initiative)</i>	8984
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	8901
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Ella Kahu, Karen Nelson, Catherine Picton (NZ/AU)	<i>Student interest as a key driver of engagement for first year students</i>	8619