



STUDENT SUCCESS

JOURNAL REPORT 2021

HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY MESSAGES

- In late 2021, the Journal was involved in a pilot project to index relevant journal articles in the **Australian Learning and Teaching Repository** supported by **Universities Australia**.
- The Australian Research Council (ARC) have commenced consultation with universities on the draft **ERA 2023 Journal list** and *Student Success* is included in the recommended journals list.
- Updates have been made to the **Journal's policies** aligned to current dialogue and debate in academic publishing. The lack of Indigenous authors and representation in academic research prompted the editorial team to update the Ethics and Malpractice statement as well as include an 'Acknowledgement to Country' in the website footer.
- In July, **Open Access Australasia** blogged about QUT-supported journals attaining the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Seal. This includes the *Student Success* journal which is only one of nine Australasian OA journals to have attained the Seal.
- Abstract views and downloads remain strong and in 2021 and the most accessed articles were from the Special Issue: ***Student Success in a Global Pandemic*** (V12(3) 2021)

INDEXING PILOT WITH THE LEARNING AND TEACHING REPOSITORY/UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA

The [Learning and Teaching Repository](#) is a curated space that indexes the work of Australian learning and teaching researchers. It also provides a set of quality resources on key learning and teaching topics for practitioners.

In late 2021 the Repository undertook a pilot project with the [Student Success](#) journal and the associated [STARS Conference](#) to determine the value of indexing and linking to current open access (OA) teaching and learning research. The pilot work involved a range of identifying activities to match published articles, practice reports and conference presentations with [Office for Learning and Teaching \(OLT\) and predecessor bodies](#) project outcomes and dissemination.

There is significant value in this activity. Firstly, indexing OA published research and practice maintains and validates the currency of the Repository as a cross-institutional collection of Australian learning and teaching research – a subject-specific repository that is currently lacking in the sector. Secondly, indexing content from *Student Success* and the STARS Conference (and eventually other OA learning and teaching specific publications) enables current research and emerging issues and initiatives to be made more accessible. The value to researchers and authors is increased visibility and engagement with the scholarship (and improved discoverability obviously equals an increase in citations).

The pilot came about as a direct result of two articles published in early 2021 in the Campus Morning Mail's *What's Needed Now in Teaching and Learning Series*: **No limits on learning: The great Australian open access L&T resource**, Pru Mitchell <https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/no-limits-on-learning-the-great-australian-open-access-lt-resource/> and **More to Open Access than research**, Tracy Creagh <https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/more-to-open-access-than-research/>. Journal Advisory Board Chair **Sally Kift** was instrumental in bringing together the curators of the LTR and the Journal to undertake this pilot.

UPDATES TO JOURNAL POLICIES

Several updates have been made to the [Journal's policies](#) aligned to current dialogue and debate in academic publishing. Firstly, a recent article in [The Conversation](#) regarding the lack of Indigenous authors and representation in academic research prompted the editorial team to consider suggestions for editors and peer reviewers who want to support Indigenous scholarship. Consequently, the [Ethics and Malpractice statement](#) has been updated with the following:

We also acknowledge different guidelines to inform research practice, underpinned by the principles expressed in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). For example, the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#) and [Te Ara Tika — guidelines for Māori research ethics](#).

The Editorial team is also mindful regarding the inclusion of Indigenous reviewers and future editorial board members. As well, an Acknowledgement of Country is now included in the Journal's website footer.

QUALITY INDICATORS

The Australian Research Council (ARC) have commenced consultation with universities on the draft ERA 2023 journal list. This is an important consultation process for all those engaged in research and to-date four of QUT's five open access journals, including *Student Success*, are on the list.



In July *Open Access Australasia* [blogged](#) about QUT-supported journals attaining the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Seal. The SEAL is awarded to journals that demonstrate best practice in OA publishing. There are seven criteria which a journal must meet to be eligible for the DOAJ Seal. These relate to best practice in long term preservation, use of persistent identifiers, discoverability, reuse policies and authors' rights. Of the **16,900** journals indexed by DOAJ, only **9%** have the seal. **Only nine Australasian journals have this seal and three are QUT journals** including *Student Success*, which was the first QUT-supported journal to attain the seal.

ABSTRACT VIEWS AND DOWNLOADS

Around **232,800** full article downloads have been recorded since the first issue was published in 2010 to December 2021. Abstract views during this time have totaled over **283,000**. *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. In 2021, the special issue (Volume 12, Issue 3) was the most accessed.

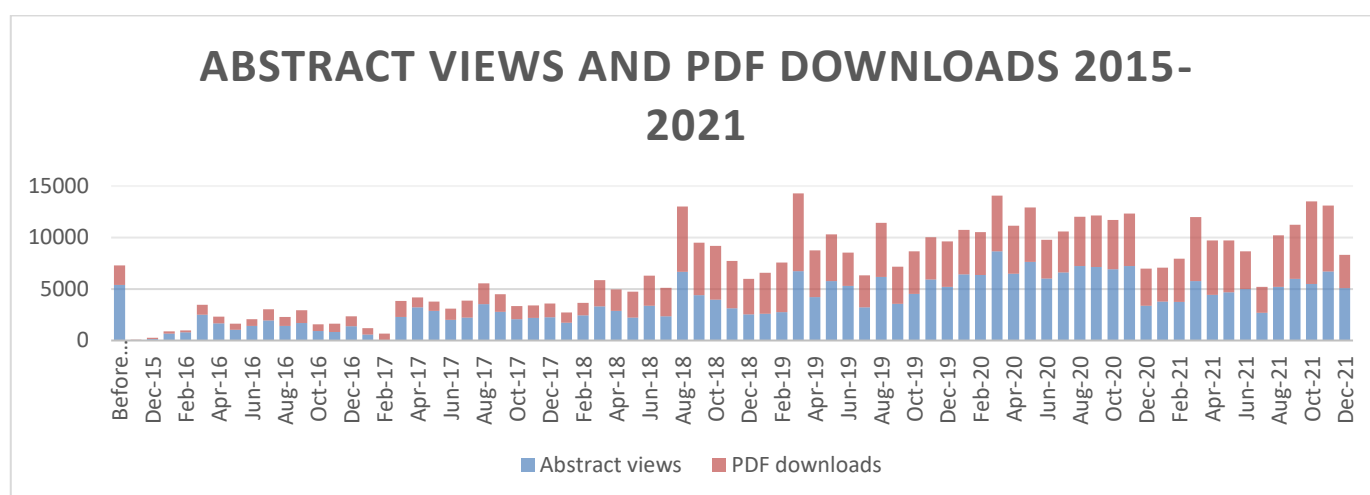


Figure 1: 2015-2021 Abstract views and PDF downloads

Figure 2 indicates that with the exception of 2020, abstract views and PDF downloads have remained similar and **have continued to increase each year**.

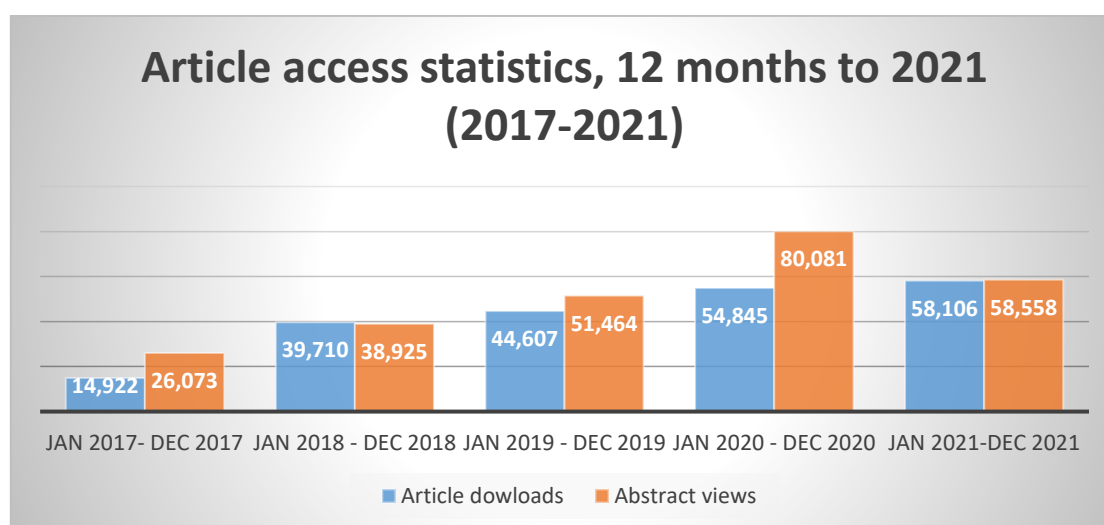


Figure 2: Article access statistics in 12-month periods (2017-2021)

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, 2021 statistics indicate that **desk rejections were at 73%** (56% in 2020). The Journal continues to receive a high number of submissions from Iran and North Africa, specifically PhD students seeking publication as part of their degree expectations.

INTERNATIONAL SCOPE

Australian authors still dominate the number of accepted submissions. Just under **78% of all accepted papers since 2010 are authored by Australians**. New Zealand authors make up 8% followed by US (5%) and UK (3%). Countries of authorship also include Ireland, Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Germany, Taiwan, Pakistan and Vietnam.

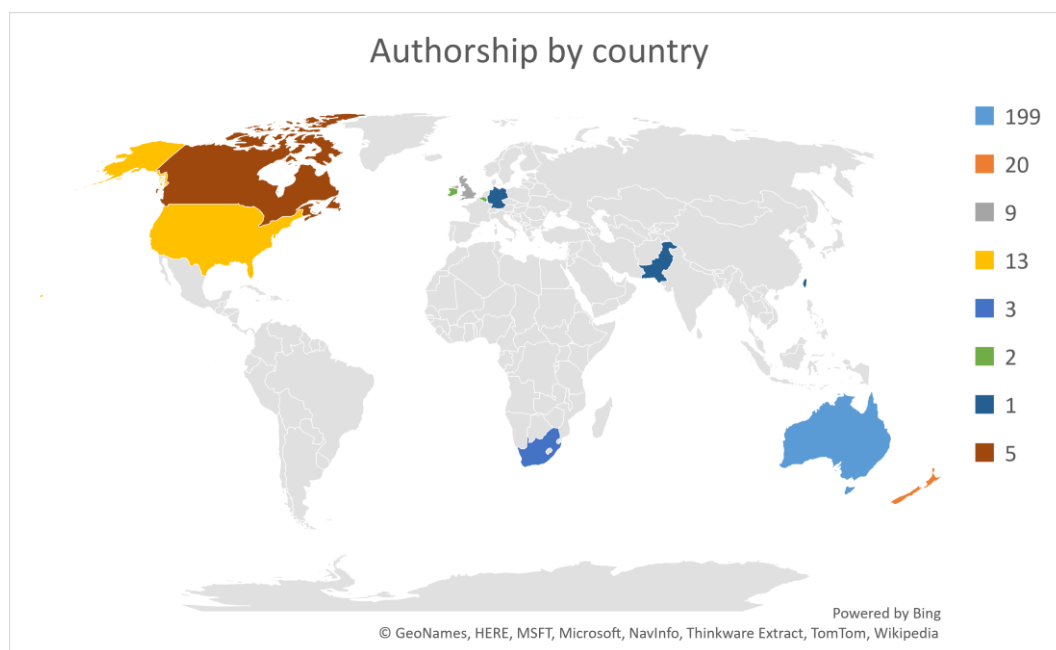


Figure 3: Authorship by country

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.

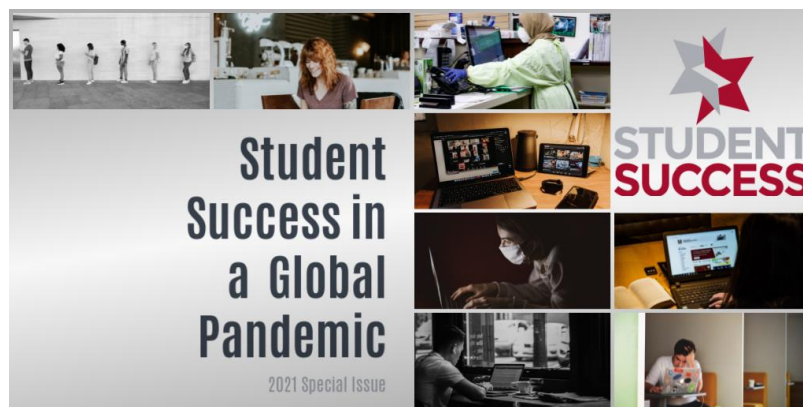
GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Data from Google Analytics is useful to track traffic for the Journal website and gives an overview of how people engage with the website. It is primarily of benefit for website administrators tracking engagement if using advertising and marketing tools but can provide context around user-behaviour. In 2021 the average monthly visit number was 5K (August – November saw the highest amount of traffic with just over 7K visits per month); most visits were direct or by organic searching; referral traffic was primarily from DOAJ (13%) and Google Scholar (11%); 90% of visitors to the site were new; 63% of visits were from Australia, followed by the US; 80% accessed using the Chrome browser; 88% accessed via desktop devices (10% via mobile devices).

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 to improve the review of the journal for inclusion in Scopus.

In 2021, Guest Editors **Professor Marcia Devlin and Dr Jade Mackay** presented the special issue: [*Student Success in a Global Pandemic*](#)



Upcoming special issues:

2022: Fostering Connections in Higher Education: Inclusive Approaches That Influence Policy, Practices and Pedagogy. Guest Editors - *Katelyn Barney (UQ, Australia), Nicole Crawford (Curtin University, Australia) and Janine Delahunty (UOW, Australia)*

2023: The Contribution of Educator Wellbeing to Achieving Student Success. Guest Editors - *Associate Professor Deanna Grant-Smith and Dr Melinda Laundon (QUT, Australia)*

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 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. In 2021 *Student Success* was allocated a **Q3 ranking** with only two years of indexed citations. There are four quartiles: Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4. Q1 is occupied by the top 25% of journals in the list. Scopus rankings are usually released in April of each year.

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
- **ERIC** - an online library of education research and information, sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education (**new in 2021**)
- **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

Twitter was used to observe and provide awareness during **International Open Access Week 25-29 October** with daily tweets to promote and celebrate the Journal as an OA publication.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Since July 2013 *Student Success* has had a Twitter account which now has over 1758 followers. Profile visits in 2021 averaged around **800 per month** (up from 200 per month in 2020). Tweet impressions¹ are currently averaging **11K per month** (up from 7K per month in 2020).

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

TWEET HIGHLIGHTS

Top Tweet earned 5,459 impressions

#OpenAccess issue includes:
#OnlineEducation #wellbeing
#assessment #SelfEfficacy
#LearningAnalytics #STEM
#StudentEngagement #BlockModel
#transition #OnlineLearning
#BlendedLearning #FirstYear #EdTech
#retention
studentsuccessjournal.org/issue/view/96
pic.twitter.com/uzTB68QHns

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. **See Appendix A**



STARS CONFERENCE AND NETWORKING

The annual [STARS Conference](#) remains the key opportunity to promote the Journal publishing a special issue from the event. The [STARS LinkedIn](#) page is also utilised to announce new issues and to promote calls for special issues etc. 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](#)

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 direct engagement)

[Equity in Higher Education \(NCSEHE\)](#). Additionally, the National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) and the Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA) continue to engage in social media and cross promote publications.

EDITORIAL TEAM UPDATES

Journal Manager Tracy Creagh, in her role in the Office for Scholarly Communications at QUT, is currently leading a national project examining open publishing initiatives supported and/or hosted by institutional libraries. The **Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)** initiative will develop a series of case studies of university libraries' open publishing initiatives and accompanying researcher case studies that demonstrate the value of these initiatives. The case studies will be helpful within and beyond the library sector to support OA advocacy work. Included in the five case studies is a profile of the OA journals hosted by QUT – including *Student Success*. The case studies are set to be released in March 2022.

Project details can be found at: <https://www.caul.edu.au/programs-projects/advancing-open-scholarship-fair#CurrentProjects>

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, CEO, Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, Universities Australia appointee on the Advisory Board of the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Australia
- Professor Kerrie-Lee Krause – Provost (Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Avondale University, 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 (OA) 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 OA 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 OA 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 of 31 December 2021) – 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>	13,405/9786
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	9559/12230
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Meredith McKague, Lisa Phillips (AU)	<i>Implementing a Whole of Curriculum Approach to Student Wellbeing</i>	8544/690
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Vincent Tinto (US)	<i>Reflections on Student Persistence</i>	7305/9324
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Lydia Woodyatt (AU)	<i>2019 Special Issue: Psychological Wellbeing and Distress in Higher Education (Editorial)</i>	6922/ 1248
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Suzi Hellmundt, Dallas Baker (AU)	<i>Encouraging engagement in enabling programs: The students' perspective</i>	6540/4616
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>	6432/10252
Vol 6(2) Conference Issue	Murray Lane, Victoria Menzies (AU)	<i>An analysis of user engagement in student Facebook groups</i>	6213/1938
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Masha Smallhorn (AU)	<i>The flipped classroom: A learning model to increase student engagement not academic achievement</i>	5365/6114
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>	4728/10825

Table 2: Five most downloaded articles (as of 31 December 2021)

<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>	20595
Vol 8(1)	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	12230
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>	10834
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>	10825
Vol 6(2) Conference Issue	Robert Whannell and Patricia Whannell (AU)	<i>Identity theory as a theoretical framework to understand attrition for university students in transition</i>	10252

Congratulations ...

- ✓ By publishing in [Student Success](#) you have already made your article open access, immediately increasing the visibility and engagement with your research.
- ✓ If your research has been publicly funded then you are more than likely complying with funder mandates that require their grant holders to make publications available to the public, free and without restrictions on re-use.
- ✓ As an interdisciplinary open access publication, you have improved discoverability of your research via search engines, social media and other channels.

The following are suggestions to improve the visibility of your published article

Email signature

Use your email signature to tell people about your most recent article. For example, under your signature add:

Just published: <Add a citation with a hyperlink directly to the article>

Institutional repositories – include your accepted version in your institutional repository.

Webpage links

If you have a profile page on your institution's website, a personal webpage or sites for any projects you are involved with, please include a link to your article. The more links there are to your article, from a range of websites, the higher it will appear on search engine results.

ORCID

[Register for a unique ORCID author identifier](#) – *Student Success* automatically adds your article to your ORCID profile.

Publicity

Consider promoting your article further – for example, [The Conversation](#) (Australian, UK, US, Africa, Canada, NZ, France, Spain, Indonesia) is an excellent venue to re-purpose your article content. The site translates academic research for the non-specialist, by pairing authors with journalists to produce articles of academic rigor, scientific accuracy and journalistic flair. The Conversation is a great way to increase research impact so consider [pitching](#) your research.

Consider also preparing a summary of your work to be disseminated or hosted on relevant professional organisation websites.

Social Media

- **Twitter and Facebook:** authors are increasingly promoting their content via [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) so it can be picked up by other researchers and practitioners (who in turn may retweet or favourite). It's quick and easy to place an announcement on your Twitter or Facebook page, highlighting the publication of your article with a link and relevant hashtags to increase engagement. As a reciprocal action, please alert the Journal of your Twitter profile so they can include these details in their tweets – **Follow the Journal on [@journalsuccess](#)**
- **LinkedIn:** If you have a current [LinkedIn](#) profile add your article to your page.
- **Join academic social networking sites:** Social communities such as [Academia.edu](#) and [ResearchGate](#)