



STUDENT SUCCESS

JOURNAL REPORT 2023

HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY MESSAGES

- *Student Success* proposes **three policy updates** to align with good practice in scholarly publishing.
- The SCImago 2022 Ranking was released in April (2023) and the ranking for *Student Success* has improved from a Q2 (2021) to a **Q1 (2022) in Education**
- Citations of articles outside of traditional academic publications are increasing (see **Overton** and **Altmetric Explorer** data).
- The passing of Editor and Advisory Board Member **John Clarke** was recognised at this year's STARS Conference and in the STARS special issue of the Journal (V14[2])

PROPOSED UPDATES TO JOURNAL POLICIES

The editorial team are pleased to share some proposed updates to the Journal policies that align with good practice in scholarly publishing. Primary consideration was given to the Committee on Publishing Ethics (COPE) guidelines and further advice and feedback was sought from QUT's Office for Research Ethics and Integrity and the QUT Copyright Officer.

The Journal proposes detail around the use of **Artificial Intelligence Generated Content** with the following policy inclusion:

Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC) tools—such as ChatGPT and others based on large language models (LLMs) cannot have accountability for a published work or research design, nor can it have legal standing to hold or assign copyright. In accordance with COPE's position statement on AI tools—these tools cannot fulfill the role of, nor be listed as, an author of an article. Authors are asked to disclose any use of AI in the development of their article. Note that tools that are used to improve spelling, grammar, and general editing are not included in the scope of these guidelines. The final decision about whether use of an AIGC tool is appropriate lies with the Journal's editors.

The Journal recommends inclusion of the **Sex and Gender in Research (SAGER Guidelines)** on the policy page:

The editors encourage authors to follow the 'Sex and Gender Equity in Research – SAGER – guidelines' and include sex and gender considerations where relevant. Authors should use the terms sex (biological attribute) and gender (shaped by social and cultural circumstances) carefully in order to avoid confusing terms

The SAGER Guidelines (developed by the European Association of Science Editors [EASE]) provide recommendations for reporting of sex and gender information in study design, data analysis, results and interpretations of findings. They are primarily designed to guide authors in preparing their manuscripts. These guidelines are now accompanied by a checklist which authors should review. The SAGER guidelines and checklist are endorsed by COPE of which the *Student Success* Journal policies are aligned to.

DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals) has released new criteria for special issues <https://blog.doaj.org/2023/11/02/new-criteria-for-special-issues/>

The criteria have been added to address the proliferation of special issues in scholarly publishing and some concerns around quality, peer review and fraud. The editorial team are confident the Journal meets the criteria but have added some additional content on both the 'submissions' and 'policies' page to ensure transparency in relation to the Journal's approach to publication of special issues/symposium collections.

QUALITY INDICATORS

The SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) indicator is a measure of the prestige of scholarly journals that accounts for both the number of citations received by a journal and the prestige of the journals where the citations originate. The SCImago 2022 Ranking was released in April and the ranking for *Student Success* has improved from a Q2 (2021) to a **Q1 (2022) in Education**.

In terms of Australian publications, *Student Success* is ranked **4th overall in Education and 3rd as an open access journal** after AJET and Journal of Learning Analytics. Internationally, *Student Success* is ranked 50th in open access education journals (up from 94th in 2021 rankings).

All details can be found at: <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=21100906909&tip=sid&clean=0>

CITATION DATA (PROVIDED BY OVERTON)

Overton is the world's largest searchable index of policy documents, guidelines, think tank publications and working papers. We have been able to access the Overton database, via the QUT Library, to see where the Journal's articles have been cited in policy documentation.¹

Since 2021 the Journal has had a total of 26 citations in six separate policy documents from 12 articles - 8 citations in 2023 (Figure 1). These citations include duplication by inclusion in the APO (Analysis & Policy Observatory). Significant is the recent Australian Universities Accord Interim Report which cited two research articles published in 2022:

K Linden, S Teakel and N Van der Ploeg, Improving Student Success with Online Embedded Tutor Support in First-Year Subjects, Student Success, 2022, 42-50, doi:10.5204/ssj.2338.

G Samarawickrema and K Cleary, Block Mode Study: Opportunities and Challenges for a New Generation of Learners in an Australian University, Student Success, 2021, 13-23, doi:10.5204/ssj.1579



Figure 1: Journal article citations in recent policy documentation (includes NCVER, Mitchell Institute, Productivity Commission, The Department of Education UK [2021-2023])

ALTMETRIC EXPLORER

Altmetric Explorer tracks mentions of research outputs (including publications and data sets) in social media, news media, blogs, Wikipedia, and engagement on scholarly platforms, plus citations in patents and policy documents.

Student Success uses Altmetric Explorer which appears as a widget on the article abstract pages. Mentions of an article are tracked using the DOI assigned to each article. As an example, if the Journal tweets about a new publication and includes the DOI then Altmetric will track how often this tweet gains 'attention'. The widget presents a coloured 'donut image' which authors can use to identify where the article has been mentioned (Figure 2). **We actively encourage our authors to use the DOI as a persistent link to the article rather than the URL link to the abstract page.**



¹ Many thanks to Tanya Harden, Scholarly Impact Librarian, Office for Scholarly Communication, QUT for providing details.

TOP 5 RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Below is a list of the top 5 research outputs in this report. Each research output has an **Altmetric Attention Score**, which provides an indicator of the amount of attention that has been received.

RANK	ATTENTION SCORE	RESEARCH OUTPUT
#1		How Do Students Adapt in Response to Academic Failure? Article in Student Success , December 2019
#2		Implementing a Whole-of-Curriculum Approach to Student Wellbeing Article in Student Success , December 2019
#3		“Shining a Light” on Mature-Aged Students In, and From, Regional and Remote Australia Article in Student Success , August 2021
#4		Supporting Student Experience During the Pandemic and Beyond Article in Student Success , October 2021
#5		Learning From the Pandemic: The Impacts of Moving Student-Staff Partnerships Online Article in Student Success , September 2021

Figure 2: Sorting research outputs with highest Altmetric Attention Scores

As an example of tracking mentions, the following article has multiple mentions in different media types:

Brooker, A., M. McKague, and L. Phillips, Implementing a whole-of-curriculum approach to student wellbeing. Student Success, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v10i3.1417>

We can see from the Altmetric score below (Figure 3) that as well as traditional citations in other academic articles, the article has been mentioned in social media and blog posts – of most interest is inclusion in a blog post published by SpringerNature:

[Psychiatric difficulties amongst UK university students: the preventative role of sleep, self-disgust and loneliness](#)

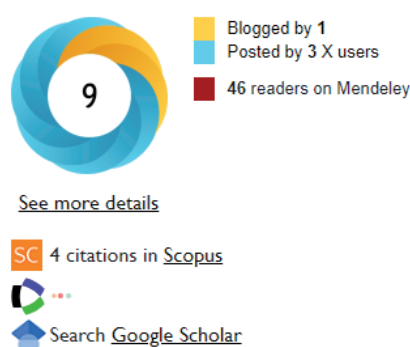
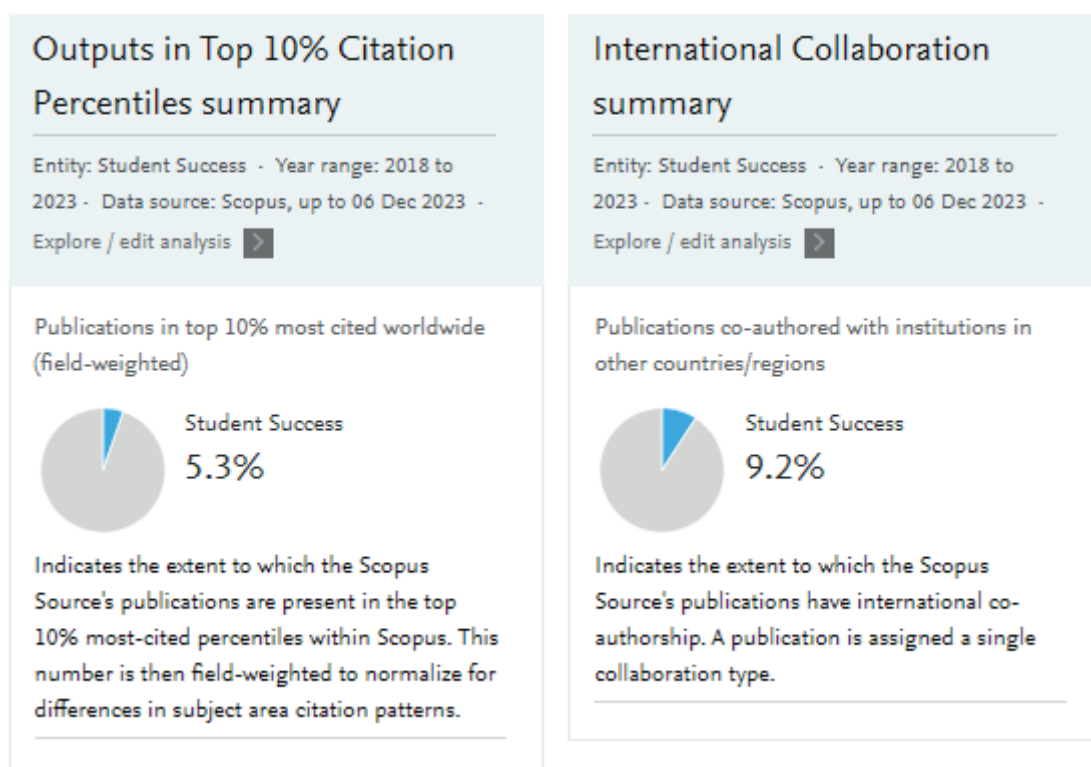


Figure 3: Altmetric score for Brooker et al. 2019

Unfortunately, Altmetric Explorer does not track citations from LinkedIn and is yet to track emerging social media platforms like Threads, Mastodon and Bluesky.

SCIVAL REPORTING

SciVal is a **research performance assessment tool that allows analysis of the data from Scopus**. The Scopus database covers over 30 million publications and updates weekly from Scopus. Inclusion of the Journal in Scopus allows for an overview of citations and research trends. Tables 3 and 4 (*Appendix*) outline the top cited articles since indexing in Scopus (2018-2023).



ABSTRACT VIEWS AND DOWNLOADS

Around **346,703** full article downloads have been recorded since the first issue was published in 2010 to December 2022. Abstract views during this time have totaled over **407,187**. *Figure 4* indicates the abstract view and download profile since 2020. In 2023, the general issue (Volume 14, Issue 1) was the most accessed.

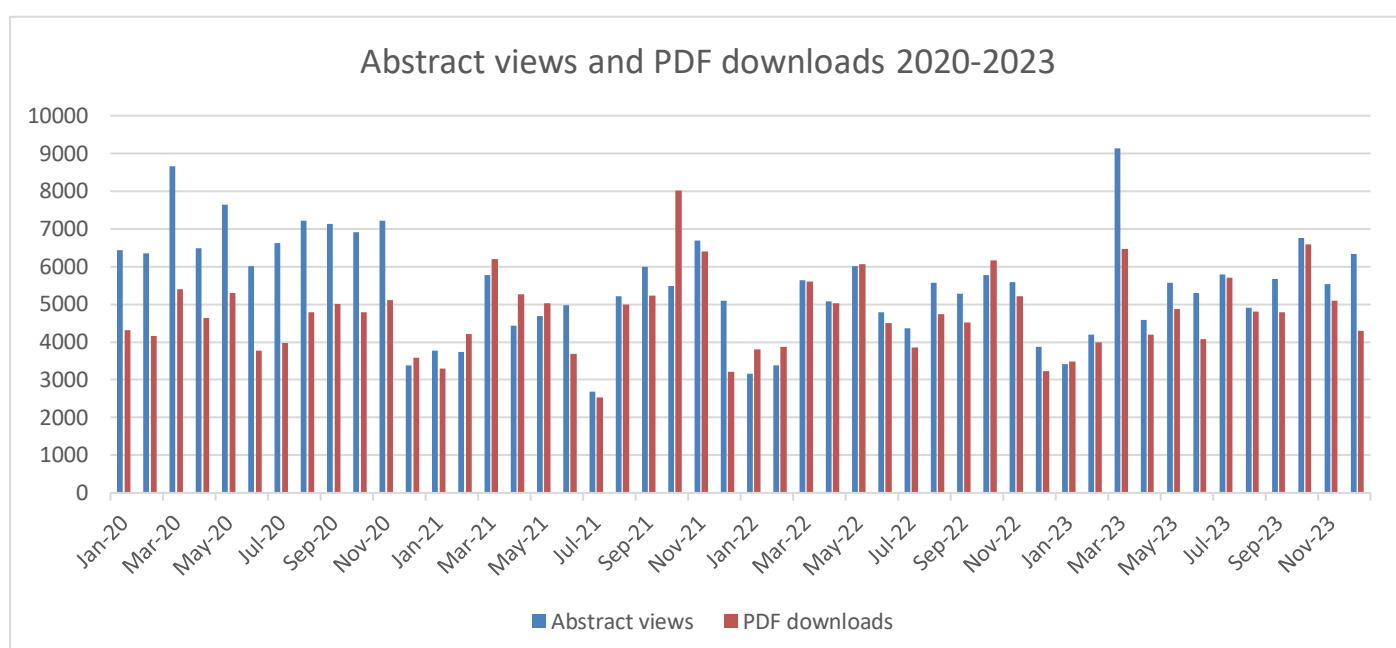


Figure 4: 2020-2023 Abstract views and PDF downloads

SUBMISSION RATES

Submission numbers continue to rise. 2023 statistics indicate that **rejections were at 88%** (83% in 2022). Submissions to the Journal increased by **76% in 2023 from 2022** (Figure 5). The Q1 Scopus ranking has brought in increased number of submissions. The Journal continues to receive a high number of submissions from Iran and North Africa and Southeast Asia, specifically PhD students seeking publication as part of their degree expectations.

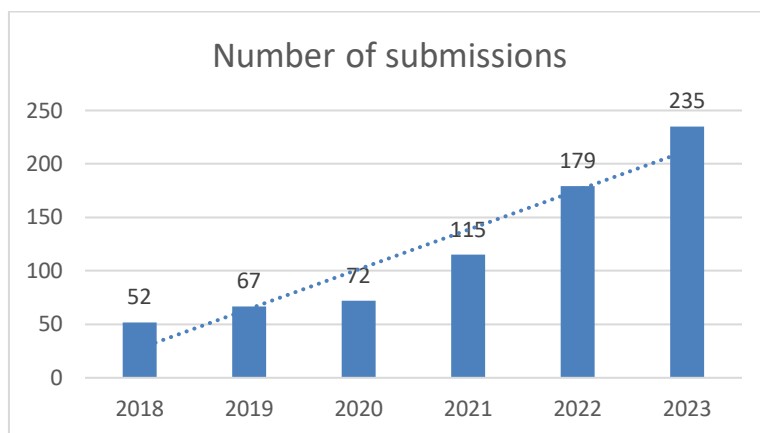


Figure 5: Number of submissions 2018-2023

INTERNATIONAL SCOPE



Figure 6: Authors by county

Australian authors still dominate the number of accepted submissions. Just under **77% of all accepted papers since 2010 are authored by Australians**. New Zealand authors make up 8% followed by US (7%) and UK (4%). Countries of authorship also include Ireland, Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Germany, Taiwan, Pakistan, Vietnam and Singapore (Figure 6).

In 2023, 80% of all authors were Australian, followed by NZ (6%), South Africa (6%), the US (5%).

Increasing the relevance of the Journal internationally requires sustained efforts to promote topicality, relevance, and the contributive nature of the publication.

PUBLISHING UPDATES

The 2023 Special Issue was published on December 11 [Educator Wellbeing in Higher Education](#). Professor Deanna Grant-Smith and Dr Melinda Laundon from the QUT Centre for Decent Work & Industry and the Centre for Justice curated this special issue. The nine research articles and three practice reports in this special issue have been prepared by 34 contributors representing a diversity of educational roles including tenured and sessional educators, academic developers and professional staff from universities in Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the US. The contributions centre educator experience and deploy a range of approaches including autoethnography, survey-based research, and interviews. The Guest Editors are officially launching the special issue on the **20th of March** via a webinar that will include authors from 8 of the 12 submissions.

INDEXING UPDATE

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
- **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

Blog posts, LinkedIn and X were used to promote the success of the Journal as an open access publication.

In May, the Managing Editor was interviewed by **Katrine Sundsbø from DOAJ** about the *Student Success* journal. DOAJ have been running a monthly blog to feature journals indexed. It was published in December: <https://blog.doaj.org/2023/12/05/the-story-behind-the-journal-student-success/>

Open Access Week 2023 (23-28 October) again provided an excellent opportunity to promote the journal and the theme was *Community over Commercialisation*. This theme encouraged a candid conversation about which approaches to open scholarship prioritize the best interests of the public and the academic community—and which do not.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Since July 2013 *Student Success* has had an X (Twitter) account which now has over 2050 followers. X has now downsized its analytics capability, so it is now not possible to report on profile visits and reach (without cost for access). The editorial team have concerns for the X platform and the exodus of users (particularly academics) due to recent platform changes and would welcome any suggestions for alternative platforms or forums to promote the Journal.

X 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)
- Share news regarding the Journal – appointment of Editorial Board members
- Promote interest in an upcoming issue
- Share links to Online First articles
- Promote of STARS events/news

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 Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) and the Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA). This partnership will be strengthened with the STARS Conference renamed the **Student Success Conference** for this year (2024). The NCSEHE is also promoting both the Journal and the Conference via their regular newsletter (many thanks to Louisa Bowman, Communication and Media Coordinator).



EDITORIAL TEAM UPDATES

In recognition of the Journal being ranked as a Quartile 1 journal in Education, the Editorial team has established an Editorial Board. The Editorial Board is in addition to the Editorial Team and the Advisory Board. The Journal team noted that the Journal has evolved significantly in recent years and submissions continue to increase in number and quality. It is timely to formally recognise the ongoing contributions of experienced and committed colleagues who have served as reviewers and/or guest editors, and to recognise those who have contributed to advancing the quality of this publication. The Editorial Board members can be found at <https://studentsuccessjournal.org/about/editorialTeam>

The passing of Editor and Advisory Board Member John Clarke was recognised at this year's STARS Conference and in the STARS special issue of the Journal (V14[2]) which published '[In Memory: Remembering John Clarke](#)'

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

ADVISORY BOARD

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- Professor Marcia Devlin – CEO, Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, Australia
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- Professor Steve Larkin – Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Engagement, The University of Adelaide, 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, Executive Director of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) and Vice President of Urban Initiatives at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), United States
- Professor Nicolette Lee, Australia
- Professor Liz Thomas, Professor of Higher Education at Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

Founding Journal Advisory Board Member and Editorial Team Alumni:

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

EDITORIAL BOARD

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Professor Thomas Roche, Southern Cross University, Australia
Associate Professor Jane Skalicky, University of Tasmania, Australia
Dr Judy Skene, Australia
Dr Masha Smallhorn, Flinders University, Australia
Professor Gary Thomas, RMIT University, Australia
Adjunct Associate Professor Kate Wilson, University of Canberra, Australia
Professor Denise Wood AM, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Table 1: Ten most accessed articles (as of 31 December 2023) – 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>	13,951/10,258
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Vincent Tinto (US)	<i>Reflections on Student Persistence</i>	11,937/13,108
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	10,748/16,276
Vol 6(2) Conference Issue	Murray Lane, Victoria Menzies (AU)	<i>An analysis of user engagement in student Facebook groups</i>	9269/2366
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Meredith McKague, Lisa Phillips (AU)	<i>Implementing a Whole of Curriculum Approach to Student Wellbeing</i>	9043/1066
Vol 8(1) General Issue	Suzi Hellmundt, Dallas Baker (AU)	<i>Encouraging engagement in enabling programs: The students' perspective</i>	8263/5287
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>	7783/13,023
Vol 10(3) Special Issue	Abi Brooker, Lydia Woodyatt (AU)	<i>2019 Special Issue: Psychological Wellbeing and Distress in Higher Education (Editorial)</i>	7279/ 1501
Vol 12(3) Special Issue	Alex Baumber, Lucy Allen, Tyler Key, Giedre Kligyte, Jacqueline Melvold, Susanne Pratt (AU)	<i>Teaching Resilience Enabling Factors for Effective Responses to COVID19</i>	6570/844
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Masha Smallhorn (AU)	<i>The flipped classroom: A learning model to increase student engagement not academic achievement</i>	6425/7424

Table 2: Five most downloaded articles (as of 31 December 2023)

<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>	22,455
Vol 8(1)	Abi Brooker, Sarah Brooker, Jeanette Lawrence (AU)	<i>First year students' perceptions of their difficulties</i>	16,276
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>	14,235
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>	13,807
Vol 8(2) Conference Issue	Vincent Tinto (US)	<i>Reflections on student persistence</i>	13,108

Table 3: SciVal – Top authors (2018-2023)

Top Authors					
Entity: Publications in Student Success 2018 to 2023 2018 to 2023 • Year range: 2018 to 2023 • Data source: Scopus, up to 06 Dec 2023 • Explore / edit analysis >					
Author	Affiliation	Scholarly Output ↓	Views Count	Field-Weighted Citation Impact	Citation Count
James, Trixie	Central Queensland University	4	41	0.65	18
Kahu, Ella R.	Massey University	3	60	2.11	28
Stone, Cathy	Curtin University	3	64	2.19	54
Zacharias, Nadine	Swinburne University of Technology	3	44	0.90	18
Allen, Bill	Edith Cowan University	2	17	0.10	1
Barney, Katelyn	University of Queensland	2	25	0.79	1
Basson, Marita	University of Southern Queensland	2	73	1.22	19
Brooker, Abi	University of Melbourne	2	47	0.35	7
Brown, Alice	University of Southern Queensland	2	73	1.22	19
Crawford, Nicole L.	University of Tasmania	2	17	1.36	11

Table 4: SciVal Top five publications in SSJ by number of citations (2018-2023)

Publication	Citations	Field-Weighted Citation Impact
Online learning in Australian higher education: Opportunities, challenges and transformations. Stone, C. (2019) <i>Student Success</i> , 10 (2), pp. 1-11.	52	5.71
Rebuilding the first year experience, one block at a time. McCluskey, T., Weldon, J., Smallridge, A. (2019) <i>Student Success</i> , 10 (1), pp. 1-15.	28	3.49
Fall break fallout: Exploring student perceptions of the impact of an autumn break on stress. Agnew, M., Poole, H., Khan, A. (2019) <i>Student Success</i> , 10 (3), pp. 45-54.	26	3.17
Measuring PhD students' well-being: Are we seeing the whole picture?. Scott, H., Takarangi, M.K.T. (2019) <i>Student Success</i> , 10 (3), pp. 14-24.	20	2.38
Supporting first-year students during the transition to higher education: The importance of quality and source of received support for student well-being. Maymon, R., Hall, N.C., Harley, J.M. (2019) <i>Student Success</i> , 10 (3), pp. 64-75.	18	1.43