



COVID-19 Forum – TAG Student Outcomes, Clubs & Volunteering 13.00, 21/05/20

Libby Poland **(LP)** – University of Canterbury Student Assoc

Brianna Townes **(BT)** – Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild

Tom Quinn **(TQ)** – UOW Pulse

Mitchell McBurnie **(MM)** – Arc @ UNSW

Kasey Miles **(KM)** – Arc @ UNSW

Kate Bottom **(KB)** – UQ Union

Tristram Keays **(TK)** - ActivateUTS

Jon Orchard **(JO)** – QUT Guild

James Hudson **(JH)** – UNE Life

Holly Hawkins **(HH)** – Griffith University Campus Life

Andrew Coleman **(AC)** - Griffith University Campus Life

Rebecca Sedicol **(RS)** – University of Sydney Union

Samantha Trodden **(ST)** – University of Sydney Union

Caroline Crawford **(CC)** – University of Sydney Union

Belinda Somers **(BS)** – Edith Cowan University

Tone Gibson **(TG)** – UON Student Central

Sara Kearney **(SK)** – UON Student Central

Stefanie Maccar **(SM)** – Monash Student Association)

Elizaveta Dilanyan **(ED)** - Monash Student Association)

Ngan Booth **(NB)** - Monash Student Association)

Elise Redmond **(ER)** – MONSU Peninsula

Isabella Patrick **(IP)** – MONSU Peninsula

Danielle Kelly **(DK)** – CQ University

Kelly Brook **(KB)** – CQ University

Jack Arnold **(JA)** – RMIT Student Life

Nicole Lane **(NL)** – RMIT Student Life

Sarah McKenna **(SM)** – RMIT Student Life

Ann-Maree Wilkinson **(AW)** – Southern Cross University

Jo Young **(JY)** - Southern Cross University

Bec Herbert **(BH)** – Southern Cross University

Cathy Tan **(CT)** – Victoria University

Elise Baitz **(EB)** – Victoria University

Steph Folau **(SF)** – Victoria University

Brendan Cavanagh **(BC)** – Swinburne Student Life

Amelia Matthews **(AM)** – Swinburne Student Life

Sarah Luckman **(SLu)** – Swinburne Student Life

Shane Lawtey **(SLa)** – Melbourne Polytechnic

Chewy Fang **(CF)** – Melbourne Polytechnic

Anh Pham **(AP)** – Melbourne Polytechnic

Omar Ghazzali **(OG)** – Melbourne Polytechnic

Andrew Giumelli **(AG)** - UCX

General

- TG** **Forward** scenario planning is difficult during the uncertainty. Looking at how to adapt events to comply with any restrictions, and also if there is another outbreak and things return to lockdown.
- University is confused as to when to allow students back on campus. VC is very enthusiastic to have students back, but all will depend on government guidance.
- JH** 92% of UNE students were already online before COVID, with only 2,000 students on campus. Had already planned to commit 40% of the events budget to online events, so was fortunately ahead of the curve.
- Likely that students will not return to campus until the start of next year, as growing from 92% to 100% online is pretty simple.
- Committed \$17K to the nightly food delivery of 60 meals/night (160 on Saturdays) during Ramadan. Meals sourced from local restaurants. Has been extended to all students, with international students particularly making use of the service.
- \$20K committed to Woolworths vouchers for needy students.
- Second Bite do a delivery to remaining international students, 143 in all.
- LP** Students not returning to campus until S2 in July.
- SLa** Communication and Information from the institute has been a challenge.
- Online exams for TAFE are new to most students, so assistance in understanding that is being provided to students via webinars and online resources.
- As a combined higher-ed institute, return to campus will be staggered, with high school and trades students returning first, next week. The rest will return pending the timing requirements of the respective bachelor and diploma courses.
- A concierge service has been established, where staff will meet and greet students to onboard them in the process of returning to campus.
- KB** Students not expected to return at any time soon.
- BH** Working on risk assessment for sports in preparation for the return of students to campus.
- JY** SCU has four student organisations, all who have stepped up to the challenge of creating engagement for the students.
- S2 orientation will be online, but the challenge is in helping students feel that they belong and to interact with each other. Looking at various platforms for virtual services and interaction fairs, such as careers, to assist.
- AW** Hosting online public speaking workshops for student leaders prior to S2 online orientation. This is an online adaptation of what was originally a physical workshop. Encouraging them to wear their varsity jackets for online orientation to create a sense of being part of a team.

Despite being in a virtual world, we still need to think about the everyday requirements such as risk assessments.

TQ Commencing work on a COVID policy in relation to event risk assessments. Keen to see if similar exists with other members.

ST COVID has experienced very significant financial impact from the COVID disruption. What started off as a very busy year, has changed dramatically, and they have been busy transitioning to online engagement.

Moving all S2 orientation activities online, with a virtual Welcome Week. This will prove a challenge, entailing moving 250 clubs, a main stage, volunteering programs, and associated support services online.

USU has recently moved to a 60% staff capacity, creating the challenge on how to deliver best possible student experience with very little revenue and reduced staff resourcing.

TK Next to no funding but thankfully no job cuts.

UTS has announced that the majority of learning in S2 will be online, which impacts on Activate's plans.

BC What will be the appetite of students for an online orientation fair? Would not recommend HexaFair. vFairs looks good but is not available until September.

SLu Greatest success when programs and events are student-driven and student-led, such as their Leadership Panel in which students spoke about their leadership experiences. Also, their National Volunteer Week video produced by their student volunteers.

AM SSL's 5K in May event is proving popular and is driving student involvement and engagement. Students complete 5km and tag as in on Instagram and go in the draw to win prizes.

ER Monash is looking to bring final year students back to campus, depending on Victorian government's easing of restrictions.

SM Second Bite is providing frozen meals for Monash international students. 720 meals handed out to date.

Collaborating with Monash University communications has been "interesting"

ED Students are beginning to return to campus, with post grads and research students first, third year students next week. First years being considered for June. This will influence how MSA program the remainder of the year.

Disability and carer services have not moved adequately online. Consequently, students with disabilities are beginning to suffer. MSA office bearers are being assisted to deal with this but may be out of their depth.

SM Looking to partner with university Community Internship Department to make the Guild wellness course eligible for credit points.

Clubs

- JO** Difficult to communicate with clubs, many which have somewhat shut down and are not doing online events, as they struggle to translate their physical activities to a virtual platform.
- Trying to communicate with clubs executives through email and Zoom meetings, to chase up overdue documentation, but this is proving challenging.
- Have created a Clubs Hub Facebook group for clubs executives. Using this quite successfully to check in, share ideas and offer advice. This will be continued post COVID. Big take-out is that the clubs are struggling with communication between their own executives, particularly coming into exams. Participation is being affected.
- Working on a new clubs portal, and aiming to hold a clubs conference, depending on what restrictions are in place when students begin to return to campus.
- JH** Of their 60 clubs, only 15 or so remain active, with the others having given up the ghost.
- Archeology society holds an Indiana Jones play reading each week, with students taking roles.
- Zoology Society held an "Endangered Species Battle" where students vote nightly on which of a pair of endangered species they like best, culminating in a final.
- LP** When COVID hit, set up three days of hour long Zoom meetings for clubs to gauge their needs, which were mainly to be kept updated and support to run online events.
- Offered a COVID grants fund for clubs.
- Challenge in managing expectations and procedure around cancelled events, particularly those using event space in the association building, and the rescheduling of those events to get as much happening as possible in S2.
- Clubs concern is reputational risk and getting engagement for new members for next year.
- KB** Difficult to engage students, as CQ Uni does not have huge clubs numbers, and those that are there have dropped by the wayside during the disruption. Exacerbated by reduced funding to engage them.
- MM** Has been a fun challenge for their staff to go from student programming and volunteering coordinating roles to running what is effectively a TV station, ie their Facebook.
- One marketing staff and one student-facing staff deployed on each activity to ensure students are receiving the best of both worlds. A bonus in this approach is that there is cross-pollination of skills amongst staff.
- Arc is providing a conduit for more effective, "looser" university communications to students. This is helping assert Arc's value in the university space.

- TQ** Clubs have been great at managing many of the emergency situations for their members, particularly international student members.
- No funding available for clubs for the rest of the year, due to UOW Pulse's financial situation. Nevertheless, has managed to launch a brand-new clubs website, which has been in demand for a few years.
- Other than the flex of paying clubs' insurance, not really able to demand much from them.
- CC** As USU cannot currently fund their 250 clubs, the clubs are increasingly fending for themselves. This disconnect has weakened the communications between USU and the clubs.
- May be able to assist those clubs in the future through vouchers, etc, but that doesn't help the current situation.
- TK** Clubs executives appear to be experiencing a higher level of workload due to the disruption. This is affecting their capacity to act effectively in their roles. This also raises the question of how to manage attracting new students into these executive roles, in fact how many clubs may not survive this period of disruption.
- Approaching event initiatives as a lot longer former and stronger collaboration. Putting out a framework that clubs can jump into such as an 'Around the World Series' released for collaboration with the cultural clubs. Focused on putting together a calendar of events with greater ideation guidance from the team about what could be run to really promote club-driven activity.
- BC** TK's approach should make the content easier to "digest" / reduce the feel of over saturation.
- AM** Working on finalising the registration of new clubs, as the process was disrupted by COVID. Currently have 89 registered clubs which is their highest ever at the half-year point.
- Clubs governance program is being incentivized with Uber Eats vouchers for students who log in to the webinar.
- Live hosting on Swinburne Student Life Insta for clubs to connect with students, and to drive students to the clubs portal.
- IP** Half of their clubs have entered hibernation.
- AC** It's a fine line between engaging clubs and over-saturating them. Difficult asking them to do lots of things for you when you can't do much back.
- BT** Working to keep clubs engaged through regular check-ins, mentoring, marketing and assisting with the activation of club events.
- Thirty clubs participated in the Stress Less Week
- TAG** TAG has launched the Clubs Resources Toolkit to provide governance support for members to share with clubs. Third chapter is now available.
<https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/student-outcomes/clubs-societies-governance-toolkit/>

Volunteering

- SK** Challenged in keeping their 600+ registered volunteers connected and engaged, through Facebook.
- Partnership with Ronald McDonald House has provided some activity.
- TQ** Able to divert students to other volunteering programs such as Australian Museums online DigiVol program and credit their hours to Pulse.
- SL** Challenge is finding volunteering roles that the students are interested in. Recently surveyed their volunteers and many responded that they were not interested in volunteering online.
- Themed volunteering monthly, eg wellness, sustainability, leadership. This also simplifies the marketing and communication when all teams are working on a common theme.
- CT** Like others, challenged by keeping volunteers engaged. Decline in open rate of their newsletters and lower number of volunteer registrations for online events is a concern.
- Not all volunteers with the interactive demands of online events. Some prefer physical tasks such as setting up and packing down events.
- Having their volunteers post a photo of someone/something that makes them smile then challenging two others to do the same. Also a paragraph about their lockdown life with a photo, then sharing via their fortnightly newsletters.
- BT** Partnered with Gold Coast Volunteering, for Cards With Connection. They collect cards made by students and deliver to at risk people in the community.
- Check-ins and Chats through Henley Aged Care with residents at one of their Gold Coast aged care homes.
- TAG** Please send through details of staff involved with Volunteering to info@tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au so that we can include them in the Volunteer member directory on the TAG website. <https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/student-outcomes/member-directory-volunteering/>

Online Engagement

- JO** Monday “What’s On With Clubs” segment on Facebook. Themed trivia has been popular.
- Online Q&A with Guild executive, advocacy, and legal/student rights have proven successful
- Online engagement is reaching saturation point.
- SK** Online English Language Centre activities three times a week.
- TG** Students challenged by having to do all their course work online, as well as having to be socially engaged with online activities and programs. UON Central is carefully managing content and programming to avoid that overloading students.

Live music performances have been popular, but it appears that students are choosing what they watch and when they watch it. This is evidenced by audience views of the performances increase significantly in the days after the live event.

JH Agrees that students are over online competitions and activities.

Eid Zoom celebrations held Saturday nights.

LP Engagement with online events now starting to drop. Feels that students are just waiting now for S2 and a fresh start.

SLa Their “Lunchtime Live” series of music performances have been successful. As with UON, the initial audience may be small, but the exponential later reach is significant.

Live takeovers of SLAM socials by students, such as fitness and cooking have been well received.

The institute has been encouraging staff to participate in the online health and wellness programs.

Their cohort of students with an intellectual disability have been posted resources, such as origami, and a “Living with Stress” booklet. This booklet was also sent to their international students. Both have been met with very positive response.

AP The success of their programs will lead to greater collaboration with the institute departments in enhancing engagement through social channels, eg hair care tips and hacks in conjunction with the hairdressing department.

KB Virtual cooking classes, workout mornings, meditation sessions. Advocacy staff hosting coffee catch-ups, but very low numbers of students are participating.

DK Student council reps also running hour long sessions covering different course levels as well as general issues. These also receive low participation, possibly because CQ Uni has a large international enrolment. Those students who do attend campus are there for the physical aspect, and online delivery is not fulfilling that.

MM At least two engagement programs being delivered online daily, such as sustainability tips, speed-friending, public debate with the debating society. These are scheduled and students can expect delivery at regular times, such as their study tips at 4.00 pm on a Monday. Views are in the vicinity of 2,000-3,000 for many of these.

Fitness programs are also being delivered regularly: “Monday Moves” dance class, Workout Wednesday, and “Fun Fit Friday”.

“If you build it they will come”: an event that was originally physical can be pivoted online and remain rich and engaging. Eg their “Culture Café” is attracting 30-40 students.

Weekly “Legal Beagles” session is well received, with university student support staff encourage to assist in the delivery of legal advice and assistance to students in areas such as international student visa, rent assistance, etc.

Lots of learning curves: Be careful of playing licensed music without proper authority and Zoom crashers!

AM The TAG National comps are a great student engagement tool.

BH Difficult to engage sporting students in sports online. However, their eSports program has been expanded due to its popularity, as it is a different market to their usual physical students. Will continue in S2 as it engages their online learning students.

JY Despite currently being in a virtual world, students are responding strongly to activities where there is a physical connection to an online activity, such as painting classes where art supplies have been posted out prior, or Netflix parties, for which \$10 vouchers have been posted with which to purchase snacks.

Also printing and posting course work for students who have been unable to come to campus to access those services.

HH Online vouchers are working well, you can electronically just give them the voucher number, means no postage.

JY “yes online vouchers are great, but sometimes I feel a bit disappointed that the money is all going to the big players rather than helping local businesses.”

TQ Allegations of hacking during their online trivia!

Student message is that they are stressed currently and that they don’t need more online activity.

ST Transferring their traditional physical mass-participation events online is impossible. Looking at smaller interactive more personal events.

CC Will not be able to do large-scale events such as Market Days, where 5,000 students will attend. Keen to learn of applications that can manage these online.

TK Trivia has been working well, but not club-centric trivia nights. Comedy nights and non-professional workshops also haven’t.

Experiencing a decline in student attendance as restrictions ease, but this may also be attributable to saturation of online events.

BC Looked at the essential needs of students outside of the classroom for “content pillars” around which to build online engagement. Results: Body (Workout Wednesdays), Nutrition (lots of content on socials), Mind (Meditation Monday), and then general content for students to engage with at leisure (eg, Good News Fridays, IGTV).

Challenge is being able to differentiate their content from any other content available on the internet. Eg, a third party online provider teaching a magic trick, also serves as an ad for the “Swinburne’s Got Talent” show. Will be dressed in Swinburne merch to provide connection and differentiation.

Lots of content has been produced, and it has been a case of throwing a lot of it against the wall to see what sticks.

SLu Student online engagement beginning to decline.

IP Online events and challenges have proven successful, with positive student feedback.

Their regular MONSU Monday in ISO has not translated successfully to an online event.

Students may be feeling overwhelmed, leading to reduced engagement numbers.

AC Online activity that can be replicated at home, such as cooking classes. Not only live, but pre-recorded and accessible later.

ED “Safe and Sexy” event was translated from a week-long physical event to an online event, revolving around sexual health, consent and education.

Responses to questions from students recorded, edited and released as several episodes across several days. Also a series of videos by a “sexpert” which received great engagement as an alternative to typical social media engagement.

Currently doing similarly with their Comedy Festival, as well as looking to recording live bands from their sound-stage in a campus theatre space, later in the year.

TAG TAG national comps are now all online and live, are a great opportunity to engage students in national programs: <http://listmail.bammail.com.au/t/r-9F65A507FF6DED092540EF23F30FEDED>

TAG Mentor Program:

Want to share your expertise to assist your colleagues and strengthen the sector, or want to benefit from the experience of colleagues who have been in the sector for many years?

<https://www.tertiaryaccessgroup.com.au/for-members/tag-mentor-program/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TAGstudent>